



POEMS

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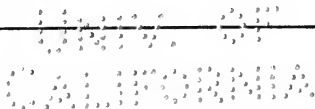
POEMS

By GIOSUE CARDUCCI

*WITH AN INTRODUCTION AND TRANSLATIONS
BY MAUD HOLLAND*

LONDON
T. FISHER UNWIN

MCMVII



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TO THE
AMERICAN

PREFACE

ON a certain day in February last, the city of Bologna presented an unusual appearance. In spite of a grey sky and steadily falling rain, the narrow streets with their old arcades and the great piazza with its fountain were thronged with people whose countenances wore that intent expression peculiar to an Italian crowd. A stranger might have asked himself what they were waiting for; for waiting they clearly were. Children were lifted up high on the shoulders of their parents, boys elbowed their way into places of vantage, a deep murmur passed through the crowd, while the rain poured steadily down and they waited for that which they came forth to see—the coffin of an old professor borne to its last resting-place.

Misunderstood and neglected through the greater part of

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a long life, in age a full measure of admiration had been accorded to him. Queen Margherita listened to him; the Government pensioned him; Italians everywhere spoke his name proudly; Paris quoted and applauded him; Sweden sent him her greatest prize; and, at the last, the people of Bologna, the city of his adoption, came out that winter day to do him honour.

They did well; for not only among the names of modern writers well known to lovers of Italian literature (and none should forget that there has been a literary as well as a national revival in Italy) does the name of Giosuè Carducci take a high—good judges have said the highest—place; but, if the annals of a country could be written in manner to show the influence of a man's thought on the action of his fellow-men, it might well be that Carducci would rank not lowly among those who lived and died for Italy. His work is done now, and lies before us in two modest volumes, the "Prose" and the "Poesie," the latter running to rather more than a thousand thin octavo pages in the Zanichelli edition, the only one which pretends to complete-

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ness. Of these, the fastidious critic may be inclined to lay aside the first quarter as of little moment, and to devote himself to the poems written after 1861. Perhaps he will pass lightly over the "Levia Gravia" and the "Giambi ed Epodi," which come next in the book, deeming that Carducci's fame will rest at last on the "Rime Nuove," the "Odi Barbare," and the "Rime e Ritmi," bound up together in the latter half of the volume. By a bare five hundred pages then, or at most by seven hundred and fifty, would Carducci be judged. Not much, but more than enough. Tennyson's merit, FitzGerald was wont to declare in magnificent defiance of popular opinion, lies in the two short volumes of poems published in 1839; while the poetic standing of "old Fitz" himself depends on the tiny paper booklet which Quaritch tried to sell for two-pence and could not, in days before the Omar Khayām Society was dreamed of.

It is not my purpose to try to appraise Carducci's merit here. Not lightly is he to be judged. Yet I think that no one who looks with an honest mind at those few

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hundred pages will be inclined to deny that here is a voice indeed, a voice which rang through the land with the first great chorus on the Cross of Savoy.

“Our joy in the battle is living, ✓
Let victory live by us dead !
In the midst of us glory is striving,
And the names of the great are as swords.
O Cross of Savoy thou art gleaming,
On walls and 'mid weapons far streaming,
Scattering horror and dread
In the ranks of the alien lords.

“We, children who yet are undaunted,
As the men from whose ashes we spring,
Thy faith in our bosoms have planted,
Our arms and our hearts to thee bring.
God save thee, most dear, and our standard,
White cross of our love and our joy,
Snow-wingèd Cross of Savoy,
God save thee ! and God save the King !”

A voice, moreover, that however troubled, and however harsh at times, has for close on fifty years pleaded, striven,

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wept, yes, and oftentimes cursed in the service of Italy and of Liberty. Whatever sad experience may have been Carducci's making him—

“in pain
Write miserable things and sad ones speak ”
 (“ond’io, dolente,
Misere cose scrivo e tristi parlo”),

as he says of himself, he has fought ceaselessly in the service of that Freedom “whose open eyes desire the truth.” And, toward her, struggling, sinking, lifting herself again, he saw the form of Italy advance, worsted in so many fights, desecrated by so many men, her banners soiled with no dishonourable dust, and her limbs marked with chains, destined to arise victorious at last and to take her hard-won place among the free Nations of the Earth.

Italy ; Freedom ; Freedom for Italy ; the words must have become almost synonymous to him at last. Love of Italy is the strongest note in the book and the most enduring. He loved her passionately, devotedly, as a man may love a woman ; never sparing her when she lacked

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faith or courage, when she rejoiced too soon at a too easy victory or too soon forgot a bitter shame, but right through the burning lines he hurls at her we feel that his heart is hers till death.

Many men loved her unto death. The Cairolì, the Settembrini, Castel Mediano, Masina, Manara, are among the names which leap up in one's heart in thinking of that long century of endeavour. They are written in the dusty registers of State prisons in Naples, and on the walls of the cemeteries round Rome, or have perished in Venetian dungeons and in nameless tombs, "down o'er the doomed peninsula's long graveyard"—"il cimitero de la fatal penisola," as Carducci calls it in the Piedmont ode. He was a boy when Milan achieved her five days' glory, when Charles Albert rode out to his tragic destiny, when Manin held Venice and when Garibaldi held Rome. The sweet singers of the day, Mameli, the twenty-year-old poet killed at the Corsini villa, Ugo Bassi, the hero monk, and many another perished. Eleven years later when Italy rose once more he could write with a knowledge and a power

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greater than them all. Possibly he lacked the spontaneous grace, the sudden fire, of the writer of "Fratelli d'Italia," but, young as he still was, the poet shows behind his work. When once Victor Emmanuel became master of Rome the need of a singer by the way to sweeten the toil of war ceased. In the years that followed Carducci rose to his greatest height. He wrote of the deeds that had been, and the remembered passion fired his thought. Dropping the easy metre, the ringing refrain, in which a nation in battle finds fittest expression, he wove on classic lines, out of the great chants of old Italian melodies which none knew so well as he, metres full of force and of music, and worthy of bearing the thought of a great poet.

Perhaps one of the greatest of his poems is "Piedmont," first printed on the 20th of September, 1890. It deals with the short-lived triumph of the campaign of 1848, and with what may be fitly termed the tragedy of Charles Albert. Of that Italian Hamlet, Carducci writes with a sympathy surprising to those who know how stern his judgments fall. Perhaps as he himself says, it is because

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his name was associated with the sound of the first Italian victory which broke on the poet's ears—

“Whence I (grown old)
Sing to thee now, O King of my fresh spring-time,
King for so many years accursed and sorrowed.”

“The Biccocca di San Giacomo” is another great work. On the old redoubt the poet stands and muses on all the lives that passed, and armies that trampled on those green plains from days of Gothic invaders to that of the first Napoleon.

Many people may prefer to either, the poem on Pietro Calvi, especially those whose good fortune it has been to drive along that wonderful road which, starting from Toblach in the Austrian Tyrol, runs for sixty miles through the heart of the Ampezzo Dolomites to come out at Belluno in the Venetian plain. Some four or five miles eastward of Cortina, an unpretentious building with the flag of Italy flying from its roof, and a dilatory official loitering at the door, tells the traveller that he has

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passed out of the country ruled by Francis Joseph. If he be given to moralising, he is struck instantly by the change in the villages and in the people, though the long flat road hardly sinks at all till comparatively near Cadore, and there is no obvious reason why there should be any change as yet. But it is there, and whether chiefly due to the increased taxation, or to the spirit of the people, is hard to say. There is less whitewash and more poetry. The window frames are not mended, but they are crammed with pots of carnations. The people appear less industrious, but there is more meaning in their faces. Perhaps, in spite of the British desire to see things clean and in order, by the time the traveller has rattled into the stony piazza of Pieve di Cadore, where Titian was born, and has seen the citizens turn out for an evening gossip while the strains of a military band and the vesper bell clash with each other, and far above the great white tops of Pelmo and Antelao turn crimson in the after-glow, he may be disposed to think that suffering is well suffered for the sake of an idea. Perhaps he will note to-morrow, perhaps he

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noted to-day along the way he came, the white cross, the stone with a few significant lines which tells by the roadside where such and such gave their lives for their country. For here Pietro Calvi fought a desperate fight at the head of men heroes almost as great as he ; here among the deep valleys and green hills where Titian lived as a child, and which he is said to have pictured in the "Marriage of St. Catherine."

"Listen. A far-off sound descends, draws near, climbs, runs, grows, is multiplied ; a sound that weeps and calls, that cries, that prays, that raves, insisting, terrible.


"'What is it ?' asks the enemy . . . 'These are the bells of the people of Italy ; for your death or for ours they are ringing.'"

It is over now :—

✓ "Slowly in the pale light of the young moon the murmur of the fir-tree lengthens by thee (Cadore), a long caress on the magic sleep of the water. The country blossoms to thee with fair children, and on the hanging cliffs girls cut the hay and sing, their ruddy locks twisted with black ribbons, their eyes

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flashing blue fires, while along the precipitous way the carter drives three horses harnessed to a waggon of pinewood, odorous from afar, and Perarolo heaves . . . and through the drifting mist the chase echoes along the heights: the chamois falls, sure hit; and the foe, when the country demands it, falls."

Any one who has been there will recognise the accuracy as well as the beauty of the description. 

It is not always that Carducci writes in this strain, not always that he is at peace with the Italy whom he served for so long. Where she forgot, where she relaxed her effort, where, having obtained that she sought, she showed herself unworthy, he is severe enough. In the verses written on the fifth anniversary of Mentana he represents the spirits of the dead rising from the grave and flying over the roofs of Rome, while the chevaliers d'industrie within the walls exclaim that if thunder comes their aim is still to fill their bag, "sarà quel che sarà"; while in the poem written in July, 1871, and called "Feasting and Forgetting," he breaks out—

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“Alas ! left alone of the sworn of a noontide,
My muse, O Caprera—thy bare rocks doth see ;
And, lone and disdainful, of Roman debasement,
Deserted Mentana—asks pardon of thee”—

and so on to the bitter end (p. 50).

It is true that the rule of the House of Savoy, though the only chance of making Italy great and one, was not Carducci's ideal. Deeply imbued with the ideas of Mazzini, to whom is dedicated one of his noblest sonnets, filled with enthusiasm for Garibaldi, his dream was of the Roman Republic restored and of no monarchy, however benevolent or however necessary. He is said to have given voice to his inmost feeling in the lines on Rome (p. 116).

“Son cittadino per te d'Italia.”

The lines ring out like the notes of a clarion, says a French writer. “Acclamons en lui,” yet another, M. Jean Carrère, has written, “non seulement l'écrivain sublime et parfait, mais encore, et surtout, un grand citoyen, un

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agitateur d'idées et de foules, le barde d'une épopée nationale, l'incarnation de tout un peuple à l'heure de son glorieux réveil. . . ."

★ It is impossible to study Carducci without seeing how ✓ widely separated his thought is from Christian thought. Not because of his anti-clericalism, violent as it is; and not because of poems far more hostile in tone than the often-quoted "Hymn to Satan"; for the poems in which his spirit most reveals itself do not touch on religion at all, ★ and the conclusion is no less sure. As for the bitterness with which others are written, and the terrible attack on Pio Nono which spoils the beautiful poem on the death of a friend, killed in the Roman campaign of '67, those who condemn Carducci's attitude would do well to recall the painful circumstances in which he wrote.

When Pius the Ninth ascended to the Pontificate the hopes of the Liberal party were largely fixed on him, and, for a moment, the wild dream of an United Kingdom of

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Central and Southern Italy, with the Pope for Sovereign Lord, filled the minds of certain reformers. It is hard to say whether such an event would have been more disastrous to the nation or to the Church. But the dream vanished as it came. In 1848 the torch of revolution passed from one European country to another with a celerity and a flare disconcerting to that immense majority of quiet people whom timidity and honest conviction always bind together—in all lands and times—as moderates. The Pope, kindly and not ill-disposed at first to the Reformers, saw the constitution of almost every country on the Continent shaken, and some finally upset. He yielded to fear and withdrew, without warning, the support he had promised to men who, trusting in his word, had risked everything for his sake. Deserted, they paid the penalty. Perhaps it is not wonderful that those who escaped spoke, not of timidity but of treachery, and that the name of Judas Iscariot was muttered in their ranks. A few years later, far from having founded a kingdom, Pius could not unaided hold Rome. Napoleon, strong enough at Villa Franca to

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dictate terms of peace to Austria and of freedom to Italy, saw Naples taken in sight of the French fleet, and ended by employing French troops to support the papal authority in Rome against those very Liberals he had once called his friends. Hence the splendid Invocation to France with which Carducci's poem begins.

It is true that the poet became less bitter with the years. "I cursed the Pope, now ten years ago ; to-day I will make friends with the Pope," he writes at the close of the "Canto d'Amore" in 1877 ; but the terms of the proffered conciliation, or rather of the proffered pity, are hardly such as could have touched even Pio's kindly heart, and could but have called for indignant repudiation from the saintly but stern ascetic who succeeded to his dignity and to his sorrow.

It is not, as we said, because Carducci wrote violently against the ministers of the Catholic Church, and sometimes against her doctrine, that we recognise his spirit to be entirely at variance with Christianity. The reason is deeper and more subtle. Essentially a lover of beauty,

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he saw beauty in its highest expression in the old forms of Greek thought, and failed to perceive it in the Christian idea. On the dreaming hills and beside the murmuring streams of Italy he beheld the crucifix, symbol of suffering, cast its—to him—hated shadow, and turned with a passionate longing to the old notions of untroubled loveliness which maybe appeal to a man more in Italy than in any land under the sun except Greece, the cradle whence Pan and Aphrodite and the nymphs of fountain and grove arose to express for man ideas old as the world, and clothed with the mystic beauty of the unintelligible universe. The attitude is familiar to us in the writings of Mr. Swinburne, with whom Carducci has been compared. Whether it is possible at this stage of the world's history to enter again into the vision of pure and childlike beauty indicated by the best of Attic thought is less easy to determine. If the Greek ideal is attainable at all it is perhaps more within the reach of such as Walter Savage Landor, who spend their lives dreaming of dead men, than of one like Carducci, steeped in the strongest passions of the nine-

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teenth century, and draining the cup to its dregs. With him the actual world is alive and present, and the world has suffered too much, perhaps, at this date ever to go back to the unconscious peace of Hymettus. In one sense, the difference between Classic and Romantic is independent of time, and the two run side by side through the centuries. Yet one age may lend itself to one development rather than to another. Catullus, "tenderest of Roman poets," and many an unknown writer of Greek epitaph, may seem modern enough, and pure Classic writers may be with us still, yet, is it altogether fanciful to perceive a difference? Look at the sonnet on page 63, so Greek in its expression, so modern in its poignant and restrained despair. How quietly perfect beside it appear the lovely lines translated by Cory—

"They told me, Heraclitus, they told me you were dead."

It may, indeed, be objected that Carducci is writing of his own child, but perhaps other instances might be given

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in support of the argument. The veiled figure who beckons to the twilit realm where Prosperina holds her court is not the same as the dread companion who rode with Sintram down the dark valley, and who signs to the men and women who fall in the Danse Macabre, but who, uncovering, may stand confessed, the Angel of God.

✕ It is curious in Carducci, and perhaps not wholly uncharacteristic, that the solitary point in which, as an old man, he came into contact with Catholic thought, is in the consideration of the pure and compassionate figure of Mary. ✎ It is noticeable, indeed, that in the wonderful poem of Nicolà Pisano (the sculptor of the early Renaissance), one which contains eight lines in her honour of all but perfect beauty, those beginning—

“È la chiamata da l'afflitta gente,”

he seems rather to demand of her to look in her graciousness on his old Greek enchantments, “on the changed

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portents of the Hellenic creed," than to guide him toward the mystery of a new heaven and a new earth. But the altered feeling enabled him not only to write the Church of Polenta, which in Italy is by many considered his greatest work, but at its close to describe the ringing of the "Angelus" as, perhaps, except in Millet's picture, it has never been reproduced :—

"Ave Maria ! When across the breezes
Sighs the low greeting ; little, humble people
Bare their heads meekly ; and with bowed heads listen
Dante, Aroldo."

.

I have left to the last the great series of verses in which Carducci deals with the common things of earth. He has been likened to Virgil, and surely since Virgil's day no writer has touched with more reverent care on the brown earth, the patient oxen, the toil of men ; not one has felt more deeply the sense of tears in human things.

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It is not in the melodious lines of his early sonnets, written obviously under the influence of Petrarch, that Carducci rises to his greatest height, but in his mature work—in, for instance, the restrained beauty of the group of sonnets in the “*Rime Nuove*”—where the reader who has first lighted on them turns one page after another in admiration and amazement.

✓ The passionate sweetness, the divine folly, of Romance is absent from Carducci. His genius is alien from the mighty and mysterious spirit that on the vast plain or Lombardy raised the towering columns, the dim arches, and stretching aisles of Milan Cathedral, with the gloomy depths and suggestions of impenetrable mysteries within, while from the roof without is seen the stupendous vision of the snow-shrouded Alps. Carducci's beauties are all Classical. They may rather be compared to the pure and regular lines of the Temple of Pæstum, built between the low hills and the sea, through whose broken arches the little goat-herd with the curly hair and straight features which belong to a race older than the Italian, leads his

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hairy flock and, turning homeward along the grass wall which marks the enclosure of the ancient city, pauses to look back on the sea, and on the outline of Capri, lying gem-like on the quiet water.

Less sensuous than Keats, but equally penetrated with the beauty of earth, Carducci is perhaps comparable to Wordsworth, but that, unlike the English poet, he never moralises on such subjects, but always leaves the things, and the emotions they evoke, to speak for themselves. The green fields of England are our peculiar heritage, and our poets do well to sing of them, but I suspect that it is not only because they do not exist in Italy as we know them that Carducci is for ever speaking of the "aratro," arable. The toil of men and beasts on the bare bosom of the earth is dear to his heart as it was to the heart of Virgil two thousand years ago. From the changes and chances of this mortal life, from the din of tongues and strife of factions, he turns for comfort to the old homely things.

In the "Idyll of the Maremma," after bitterly com-

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plaining of the struggle which it was his to make, he bursts out—

“O all along the wind the whispering line

Of poplars ! O dark shades where thick trees hide

That rustic churchyard seat on feasts divine,

Whence, bare and brown, the ploughed plain stretching
wide

And green the fields are seen and green the sea

Scattered with sails, the burial ground beside.”

While the feeling more lightly dwelt on runs right through the charming poem called “Davanti San Guido,” where the poet returns to the home of his childhood and confides to his old playmates, the cypresses, that he is grown learned and celebrated, they hearing him out with half-contemptuous pity. Perhaps the most characteristic of his poems is the sonnet on the ox, the “pio bove,” whom he saw at work. It will be found on page 59, and next to it that other sonnet to Virgil, applicable perhaps to Carducci himself.

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In conclusion, I should like to say a few words about the poems given in this volume. They were selected with great care, partly as being especially well known or typical, partly by personal preference, a quantity almost impossible to eliminate in a work of this sort. As far as possible the original metre has been kept. Carducci found the old form of Italian rhymed verse too narrow for his thought, and broke through it in the volumes of "*Odi Barbare*" and "*Rime e Ritmi*," "poems of diverse metres," says a writer in the *Times* (Lit. Sup., Feb. 1, 1897), "but all of them stamped with a majestic sense of Rome in their unrhymed verses and in their traditional accentuated Italian measure, following on the Greek and Roman quantity." It seemed to me more "honest" translation, if I may so express myself, to try to follow him in the poems taken from these volumes, but I did not do so without a deep sense of my own incapability adequately to render into English the beautiful ancient metre. I ought, perhaps, also to apologise for having copied the Italian rhyme sequence in the sonnets instead of adhering to the Miltonic form.

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I know that it is said that no deviation from it is allowable in English, except the return to the Shakesperian arrangement. I have broken the law which altereth not, and can only beg pardon. Several of the poems have been already mentioned. In one or two, where the allusions were rather obscure, I have added notes, but I have always carefully distinguished my own notes from the translation of Carducci's. If this little book, with its numerous shortcomings, persuades any one to study the volume from which it is taken, I shall think the trouble spent on it well worth while.

MAUD HOLLAND.

March 20, 1907.

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For Eduardo Corazzini

WHO DIED OF WOUNDS RECEIVED IN THE ROMAN CAMPAIGN
OF 1867.

*Hast thou for this, Master of Ferney, steeled
The gibe, the shafts of truth,
And thou, Geneva's citizen, unsealed
The deep tears of thy ruth,*

*Twin messengers that flashed through Europe's night,
Whose herald call flung down
The black bastille of Paris and the might
Of Louis' radiant crown?*

*Wherefore, 'mid fire and sword, on plain, on mount,
Chanting in accents blind,
With feet unshod and victory on thy front,
Thy banners to the wind,*

Per Eduardo Corazzini

MORTO DELLE FERITE RICEVUTE

NELLA CAMPAGNA ROMANA DEL MDCCCLXVII.

Dunque d'Europa nel servil destino

Tu il riso atroce e santo,

O di Ferney Signore, e, cittadino

Tu di Ginevra, il pianto

Messaggeri inviaste, onde gioioso

Abbattè poi Parigi

E la nera Bastiglia e il radioso

Scettro di San Luigi ;

Dunque, tra 'l ferro e 'l fuoco, al piano, al monte,

Cantando in fieri accenti,

Co piedi scalzi e la vittoria in fronte

E le bandiere a' venti,

For Eduardo Corazzini

*Did all the world behold thy legions pass,
The proud Republic form,
And thrones and altars scattered as the grass
Is swept before the storm,*

*If thou dost drive thy sons with ruling harsh
Down the dark ways of blood,
Exchanging for the vile bird of the Marsh
The hero's eagle brood;*

*If, 'neath the Sabine hills, thine armies spread
By fame's immortal home
Clasp friendly hands and mingle with the dread
Black troops of papal Rome;*

*And, serving him who hath his God denied,
France thou dost cause to flow
The tears of mothers and of many a bride
Whose life's desire lies low;*

Per Eduardo Corazzini

*Vide il mondo passar le tue legioni,
O repubblica altera,
E spazzare a sé innanzi altari e troni,
Come fior la bufera ;*

*Perché, su via di sangue e di tenèbre
Smarriti i figli tuoi
E mutata ad un' upupa funèbre
L' aquila de gli eroi,*

*Là ne' colli sabini, esercitati
Dal piè de l'immortale
Storia, tu distendessi i neri agguati,
Masnadiera papale,*

*E, lui servendo che mentisce Iddio,
Francia, a le madri annose
Tu spegnessi i figliuoli ed il desio
Di lor vita a le spose,*

For Eduardo Corazzini

*While unto us, beholding what thou art,
Thy deeds our grief enhance,
We, who had warmed us at thy noble heart,
We, who have loved thee, France?*

*Ah! woe is me. Or on the hills that shine,
Or in the cloister green,
I shall not see thee more, sweet friend of mine,
As in those days serene.*

*Upon the mountain paths which for thy sake
I clambered from the plain,
Thy gun the silence of the hills would break
From time to time again.*

*I sang of Rome beside the stream that well
Is known beneath the sun,
And the dog barking as the feathers fell
Broke up the verse begun.*

Per Eduardo Corazzini

*E noi per te di pianto e di rossore
Macchiassimo la guancia,
Noi cresciuti al tuo libero splendore,
Noi che t' ammammo, o Francia?*

*Ahi lasso! ma de' tuoi monti a l' aprico
Aer e nel chiostro ameno
Piú non ti rivedrò, mio dolce amico,
Come al tempo sereno.*

*Per l' alpestre cammino io ti seguía;
E 'l tuo fucil di certi
Colpi il silenzio ad or ad or fería
De' valloni deserti.*

*L' alta Roma io cantava in riva al fiume
Famoso a l' universo:
E il can latrando a le cadenti piume
✓ Rompeva a mezzo il verso,*

For Eduardo Corazzini

*Oh eagerly he sought thee through the glade,
Whence the smoke drifted soon :
Now doth he scratch upon a grave new-made,
And howleth to the moon.*

*Faded are now the hills: but, swiftly winging
His way through heavenly fire,
April will come who unto thee was bringing
A crown for thy desire.*

*Instead he will rain down a joyful flight
Of birds that, amorous, sing
On the rank grass that in untrammelled height
From thy young heart doth spring.*

*Why didst thou leave, O friend, the hills made glad
With vine, the purple grace?
Why didst thou shun the tears that, checked and sad,
Ran down a virgin face?*

Per Eduardo Corazzini

O a te accennando usciva impaziente,

Fuor de la macchia bruna ;

Or raspa su la tua fossa recente,

E piagnesi a la luna.

Squallidi or son i monti : ma l' aprile

Roseo nel ciel natío

Tornerà, che doveva una gentile

Ghirlanda al tuo desío :

E in vece condurrà l' allegra schiera

De gli augelli in amore

Su l' erba ch' alta andrà crescendo e nera

Dal tuo giovenil core.

Perché i bei colli di vendemmia lieti,

Perché lasciasti, amico,

Sfuggendo a' pianti de l' amor segreti

Sur un volto pudico?

For Eduardo Corazzini

*Why didst thou leave thy mother? O when she
Doth sit down to break bread,
Thy place she looks on and in grief for thee
She turns away her head.*

*Forgive, O Mother! At thy tender qualms
He bowed his head indeed;
But his imprisoned leader called to arms,
And the great Rome did plead.*

*He through triumphal arches could behold,
Within the Latian sky,
The noble image of the Rome of old,
Outraged, in misery.*

*She who the ark of our great compact kept,
The altar of our right,
For whom Petrarca trembled, Dante wept,
And Macchiavell' did write.*

Per Eduardo Corazzini

Perché la madre tua lasciasti? Oh, quando

A mensa ella sedea,

Il tuo loco guardava, e lacrimando

Il viso rivolgea.

Madre, perdona. A un cenno tuo la testa,

La balda testa ei piega;

Ma il suo duce prigion bandì la gesta,

E la gran Roma prega.

Egli su' trionfali archi diritta

Vide, nel ciel del Lazio,

Di Roma vide l' alta imago, afflitta

D' inverecondo strazio.

Ella che tien del nostro patto l' arca,

L' ara del nostro dritto;

Per cui Dante gemé, fremé il Petrarca,

E 'l Machiavelli ha scritto;

For Eduardo Corazzini

*Austere and tender, with deep brows that mourned
And mother's look divine,
Her arms outstretched, her face toward him she turned
Saying: "O son of mine."*

*And he, false shepherd, (give but ear, thou brood
Of penned up slaves, give ear!)
Who waters Apennine's green slopes with blood,
Bidding her pastures bear*

*Thick harvest while, within his heart unmoved,
A fierce desire doth cry;
Through him he left the one sweet soul he loved,
Through him he went to die.*

*Now, in that place where one on other hurled
The people of the dead,
Beseech God's vengeance by which all the world
Shall once be comforted;*

Per Eduardo Corazzini

Austera e pia ne la materna faccia

Con lagrimoso ciglio

Lo riguardava, e gli tendea le braccia,

E gli diceva : O figlio.

Ed ei, questo predone (ascolta, o greggia

Turpe di schiavi, ascolta),

Questo predon cui l'Apennin verdeggia

Di lieti paschi e folta

Messe, questo feroce a cui nel core

Ridea queto un desire,

Per lei lasciava il suo solingo amore,

Per lei corse a morire.

Ed or ne' luoghi, ove fra sé ristretta

É la gente de i morti

Per forza, e chiama a Dio la gran vendetta

Che il mondo riconforti,

For Eduardo Corazzini

*Now, with those fallen in June's burning heat
Across the Roman plain,
And with those fallen in December sleet,
Martyrs for freedom slain,*

*He speaks, and with mute horror looks once more
On Nemesis' iron scroll ;
He speaks of him, the bastard Emperor,
Cæsar of ruthless soul.*

*While weeping mothers chide the destiny
Which bade their years increase,
And, with the hands that soothed their nurslings' cry,
Fold the dead lids to peace ;*

*Garlands forgetting many a maiden wears
Black sorrow's woeful pall,
The waiting cradle no soft burden bears, . . .
Let tyrants cursèd fall !*

* * * * *

[The last sixteen verses of this poem have been omitted.]

Per Eduardo Corazzini

Or co i caduti là nel giugno ardente

De l' alta Roma a fronte

E co i caduti nel decembre algente

De' martiri su 'l monte

Parla, e Nemesi al suo ferreo registro

Guarda con muto orrore,

Parla di lui, del Cesare sinistro,

Del bieco imperatore.

Le madri intanto accusano ne' pianti

Del viver tardo i fati

E con le man che gli addormían lattanti

Compongono gli occhi a' nati,

In vece di ghirlande le fanciulle

Vestonsi i neri panni,

Mancan le vite a le aspettanti culle . . .

Maledetti i tiranni!

19 GENNAIO 1868.

For Eduardo Corazzini

NOTE.

(Page 44, verse 1.)

THE first two lines of the verse refer to the siege of Rome in 1849. The last two to the fight on the 2nd of December, 1851, during Napoleon's *coup d'état*; "martiri su'l monte" = Boulevard Montmartre. It seemed best not to render it literally in English. The allusion in the next verse is of course to Louis Napoleon. Carducci could neither forgive Pius IX. for securing himself by French aid, nor the French for assisting him.



Feasting and Forgetting

*Shout louder, leap higher, feast gladly, feast madly,
Break down all the barriers—on duty's still ways,
From cities and villas, from hill-sides and valleys,
Applaud ye the joyful—to-day's, yesterday's.*

*Up, maidens and matrons, desiring, light dancing,
Strip orchards Italian of blossom and shade,
Go, cover with garlands, with looks wildly glancing,
The might of our masters set forth on parade.*

*Ah! see where uplifted high o'er the bold shoulders
Of swift daring lancers—your honour doth ride!
O sun of July through the old Latin marbles
The painted stands gilding—dost flatter their pride?*

Feste ed Oblii

*Urlate, saltate, menate gazzara,
Rompete la sbarra—del muto dover ;
Da ville e da borghi, da valli e pendici,
Plaudite a i felici—di oggi e di ier.*

*Su, vergini e spose, bramosi, baccanti,
Spogliate l'Italia di lauri e di fior,
Coprite di serti, di sguardi fiammanti
Le glorie in parata de i nostri signor.*

*Deh come cavalca su gli omeri fieri
De' baldi lancieri—la vostra virtù !
O sole di luglio, tra i marmi latini
A gli aurei spallini—lusinghi anche tu.*

Feasting and Forgetting

*And past the dark hill and the Forum low lying,
Mixed horsemen and footmen, the living wave sweeps,
And arrogant bugles and trumpets loud crying
Insult the deep silence where Aventine sleeps.*

*Alas ! left alone of the sworn of a noontide
My muse, O Caprera,—thy bare rocks doth see ;
And, lone and disdainful, of Roman debasement,
Deserted Mentana, asks pardon of thee.*

*There wine and the light and the music that quivers
Are kindling the nerves and the blood in their hour ;
Here sways to the moon in the cool breeze that shivers
The withering stem of a single poor flower.*

*And elsewhere the moon whose pure rays here are streaming
Doth break o'er the promise—that soft words endear,
Which unto another low murmurs, caressing,
The young widowed bride of—the dead man laid here,*

Feste ed Oblìi

*E mobili flutti di fanti e cavalli
Risuonan pe 'l clivo su 'l fòro latin,
E il canto superbo di trombe e timballi
Insulta i silenzi del sacro Aventin.*

*Ahi sola de' vóti d' un dí la severa
Mia musa, o Caprera,—riparia con te,
E, sola e sdegnosa, de l' orgia romana,
Deserta Mentana,—ti chiede mercé.*

*Là il vino, la luce, la nota che freme,
Ne i nervi, nel sangue risveglian l' ardor :
Qui trema a la luna con l' aura che geme
Lo stelo riarso d' un povero fior.*

*E altrove la luna del raggio tuo puro
Illumina il giuro—rïanima il sí,
Che mormora a un altro languente vezzosa
La vedova sposa—del morto ch' è qui,*

Feasting and Forgetting

Or fills with its insolent beauty the attic

Where wakes to the cares of a morrow of dread

The mother who on this fine feast-day ecstatic

In vain down the highways went asking for bread.

Feste ed Oblii

*O empie insolente la camera mesta
Svegliando a le cure del dubbio diman
La madre che in questo bel giorno di festa
In vano pe' trivi chiedeva del pan.*

2 luglio 1871.

(Giambi ed Epodi.)

RIME NUOVE

1861-1887

Night ✓

*Still in thy shadowy veils enfold me, Night,
Wearied of mortal men and my low pain,
Take thou my griefs, call me from mortal sight,
Still would my heart alone with thee remain!*

*With what fair promise of unknown delight
Dost lure the soul betrayed to hope again?
What power is thine to bless when thought's dark flight
Sweeps through the universe and knows it vain.*

*O Night divine, I know not what strange balm
Fore-told and pensive is by thee exprest
Where rage and passion never more shall harm,*

Di Notte

Pur ne l' ombra de' tuoi lati velami

*Gli umani tedi, o notte, ed i miei bassi
Crucci ravvolgi e sperdi: a te mi chiami,
E con te sola il mio cuor solo stassi.*

Di quai d' ozio promesse adempi e sbrami

*Gl' irrequieti miei spiriti lassi?
E qual doni potenza a i pensier grami
Onde a l' eterno o al nulla errando vassi?*

O diva notte, io non so già che sia

*Questo pensoso e presago diletto
Ove l' ire e i dolor l' anima oblia:*

Night

*But home I find in thee, like child distressed
Which sobs and sleeps upon a bosom warm,
Clasped by its grand-dam to her ancient breast.*

Di Notte

*Ma posa io trovo in te, qual pargoletto
Che singhiozza e s' addorme de la pia
Ava abbrunata su l' antico petto.*

The Ox

*I love thee, O mild ox ; a sentiment
Of strength and peace thou bringest unto me.
Whether as solemn as a monument
Thou gazest o'er the fields, fertile and free,*

*Or whether bowing to the yoke content
Man's nimble work is seconded by thee ;
He shouts, he lifts the goad : with slow gaze bent
Thy patient eyes answer his urgency.*

*From the broad nostrils, black and moist, arise
Breaths of the spirit, like a joyous strain
The bellowing voice upon the calm air dies ;*

*Ample and quiet is mirrored once again,
Austerely sweet within the sea-deep eyes,
Green and divine the silence of the plain.*

Il Bove

*T' amo, o pio bove ; e mite un sentimento
✓ Di vigore e di pace al cor m' infondi,
O che solenne come un monumento
Tu guardi i campi liberi e fecondi,*

*O che al giogo inchinandoti contento
L' agil opra de l' uom grave secondi :
Ei t' esorta e ti punge, e tu co 'l lento
Giro de' pazienti occhi rispondi.*

*Da la larga narice umida e nera
Fuma il tuo spirto, e come un inno lieto
Il mugghio nel sereno aer si perde ;*

*E del grave occhio glauco entro l' austera
Dolcezza si rispecchia ampio e quïeto
Il divino del pian silenzio verde.*

Virgil

*As, when on burnt-up fields the merciful
Slow-rising moon the summer dew lets fall,
In the white light the streamlet murmurs full,
Glimmering between low banks made musical ;*

*And hidden in the boughs the nightingale
Doth all the world serene with song enthrall,
The traveller pauses, dreaming of the pale
Gold hair he loved, nor marks the hours that call ;*

*And the sad mother who doth mourn in vain,
Lifts from a grave her eyes toward heavens that shine,
And in that dawn diffused finds peace in pain ;*

*The sea, the mountains, stretch in glittering line,
In the tall trees a fresh breeze springs again ;
Such is thy verse to me, master divine.*

Virgilio

*Come, quando su' campi arsi la pia
Luna imminente il gelo estivo infonde,
Mormora al bianco lume il rio tra via
Riscintillando tra le brevi sponde ;*

*E il secreto usignuolo entro le fronde
Empie il vasto seren di melodia,
Ascolta il viatore ed a le bionde
Chiome che amò ripensa, e il tempo oblia ;*

*Ed orba madre, che doleasi in vano,
Da un avel gli occhi al ciel lucente gira
E in quel diffuso ^{alba} albor l'animo queta ;*

*Ridono in tanto i monti e il mar lontano,
Tra i grandi arbor la fresca aura sospira ;
Tale il tuo verso a me, divin poeta.*

Funere Mersit Acerbo

*O thou who, with our father lying near,
Beneath the flower-strewn Tuscan hill art sleeping,
Betwixt the grasses of thy grave didst hear
Even now a timid voice which called thee weeping?*

*It is my little son who at thy drear
Door stands and knocks, who held within his keeping
Thy fair, high name; he too flies fields grown sear,
Which thou didst find, O brother, bitter reaping.*

*Ah! no; but playing on the painted floor,
✓ And still rejoiced at many a vision bright,
The shadow clothed him, and to thy cold shore,*

*Thrust him out lonely. O beneath the light
Receive him thou, since he the sun no more
Can see, nor call his mother in the night!*

Funere Mersit Acerbo

*O tu che dormi là su la fiorita
Collina tōsca, et ti sta il padre a canto ;
Non hai tra l' erbe del sepolcro udita
Pur ora una gentil voce di pianto ?*

*È il fanciulletto mio, che a la romita
Tua porta batte : ei che nel grande e santo
Nome te rinnovava, anch' ei la vita
Fugge, o fratel, che a te fu amara tanto.*

*Ahi no ! giocava per le pinte aiole,
E arriso pur di vision leggiadre
L' ombra l' avvolse, ed a le fredde e sole*

*Vostre rive lo spinse. Oh, giú ne l' adre
Sedi accoglilo tu, ché al dolce sole
Ei volge il capo ed a chiamar la madre.*

Fiesole ✓

*Upon the hill whence Fiesole looks low
To where the city binds her flowery zone,
And Arno palely creeps, with footsteps slow,
The bell calls the Franciscans one by one.*

*The lizard fixing eyes that tireless glow
Stares from the wall of cleft Etruscan stone ;
A clump of cypress where the spent winds blow
Wails and the vesper rises, white and lone.*

*But from the slope moon-curving to the plain
The joyous belfry lords it, towering fair,
Like Italy arising to the sky.*

*In thy work, Mino,¹ Nature lives again,
Smiling on children with loose curling hair,
Virgin and mother through eternity.*

¹ Mino da Fiesole, the sculptor.

Fiesole

*Su l' arce onde mirò Fiesole al basso,
Dov' or s' infiora la città di Silla,
Stagnar livido l' Arno, a lento passo
Richiama i francescani un suon di squilla.*

*Su le mura, dal rotto etrusco sasso
La lucertola figge la pupilla,
E un bosco di cipressi a i venti lasso
Ulula, e il vespro solitario brilla.*

*Ma dal clivo lunato a la pianura
Il campanil domina allegro, come
La risorta nel mille itala gente.*

*O Mino, e nel tuo marmo è la natura
Che de' fanciulli a le ricciute chiome
Ride, vergine e madre eternamente.*

To a Donkey ✓

*O ancient patience, wherefore dost thou gaze
Across the hedge upon the eastern skies,
Through elder branches, o'er the flowery maze
Of fragrant white-thorn with moist kindling eyes?*

*Why dost thou bray to heaven with dolorous cries?
It is not Love, O rogue, that woos thy days?
What memory scourges thee? What hope that flies
Spurs on thy tired life down aching ways?*

*Art dreaming of Arabian deserts free
Where, matched in rivalry of fortitude,
Thou with the steeds of Job didst turn and flee?*

*Or wouldst thou fly to Hellas' solitude,
Calling on Homer, who doth liken thee
To Telamonian Ajax unsubdued?*

A Un Asino

*Oltre la siepe, o antico paziente,
De l' odorosa biancospin fiorita,
Che guardi tra i sambuchi a l' oriente
Con l' accesa pupilla inumidita?*

*Che ragli al cielo dolorosamente?
Non dunque è amor che te, o gagliardo, invita?
Qual memoria flagella o qual fuggente
Speme risprona la tua stanca vita?*

*Pensi l' ardente Arabia e i padiglioni
Di Giob, ove crescesti emulo audace
E di corso e d' ardir con gli stalloni?*

*O scampar vuoi ne l' Ellade pugnace
Chiamando Omero che ti paragoni
Al telamonio resistente Aiace?*

Vignette ✓

*The merry spring-time and its fair array
Shines o'er the topmost crest of memories sweet,
And the green hill where first I saw her feet.*

*Glistening on pool and coppice April lay
And, bending in the warm breath of the south,
The young leaves trembled at the young wind's mouth.*

*And she, within the forest's cool recess,
Went singing to the sun in her white dress.*

Vignetta

*La stagion lieta e l' abito gentile
Ancor sorride a la memoria in cima
E il verde colle ov' io la vidi prima.*

*Brillava a l' aere e a l' acque il novo aprile,
Piegavan sotto il fiato di ponente
Le fronde a tremolar soavemente.*

*Ed ella per la tenera foresta
Bionda cantava al sole in bianca vesta.*

Idyll of the Maremma

*On April's budding wing that doth with rose
Touch my low room, I see thee smile once more,
Suddenly, Mary, to my heart come close ;*

*And that heart which forgot thee, being sore
And trouble tossed, would still in thee confide,
O my first love, sweet dawn of love's sweet lore.*

*Where art thou ? Not with sighs thy care to hide
And mate-less didst thou pass ; thy natal place
Hath surely seen thee blessed, mother and bride.*

*For the young strength and form's abundant grace
And heaving bosom 'neath the veil confesst
Were meant for bearing of a vigorous race.*

Idillio Maremmano

*Co 'l raggio de l' april nuovo che inonda
Roseo la stanza tu sorridi ancora
Improvvisa al mio cuore, o Maria bionda ;*

*E il cuor che t' obliò, dopo tant' ora
Di tumulti oziosi in te riposa,
O amor mio primo, o d' amor dolce aurora.*

*Ove sei? senza nozze e sospirosa
Non passasti già tu ; certo il natio
Borgo ti accoglie lieta madre e sposa ;*

*Ché il fianco baldanzoso ed il restio
Seno a i freni del vel promettean troppa
Gioia d' amplessi al marital desio.*

Idyll of the Maremma

*Strong sons have doubtless hung upon thy breast
And now, grown bold, look back to catch thine eyes,
Mounting the uncurbed steed in careless zest.*

*Beautiful wert thou, girl, when o'er the rise
And dip of the long furrows thou didst come,
Twisting a wreath of meadow-orchises,*

*Laughing and tall, under the curvèd dome
Of radiant lids filled with shy fires thy great
Blue eyes profound opening upon thine home.*

*Like succory's peaceful flower among the wheat
Ripening to gold 'mid the fair hair wind-spread
Blossomed those eyes of blue ; midsummer heat*

*Lay round thee, o'er thee, and the sun's rays sped
Scattering light athwart the branches green
Of the pomegranate, dyed a dusky red.*

Idillio Maremmano

Forti figli pendean da la tua poppa

Certo, ed or baldi un tuo sguardo cercando
Al mal domo caval saltano in groppa.

Com' eri bella, o giovinetta, quando
Tra l' ondeggiar de' lunghi solchi uscivi
Un tuo serto di fiori in man recando,

Alta e ridente, e sotto i cigli vivi
Di selvatico fuoco lampeggiante
Grande e profondo l' occhio azzurro aprivi !

Come 'l cíano seren tra 'l biondeggiante
Òr de le spiche, tra la chioma flava
Fioria quell' occhio azzurro ; e a te d' avanti

La grande estate, e intorno, fiammeggiava ;
Sparso tra' verdi rami il sol ridea
Del melogran, che rosso scintillava.

Idyll of the Maremma

Proud at thy passing, as though to his queen ✓
The peacock set his jewelled tail in sight,
Greeting thee with harsh scream in pomp serene.

O since that time how cold to me the flight
Of years hath seemed, worthless and dark and gone?
Better have married thee, O Mary bright!

Better to wander searching through the lone
Woods to the plain the straying ox¹ perverse,
Which leaps the bush and halts and stares at one,

Than sweat behind small rhymes confined and terse!
✓ Better by work forget than stay to seek
The enormous riddle of the Universe!

Now, cold, assiduous, through my brain doth break
The piercing worm of thought whence I in pain
Write miserable things and sad ones speak.

¹ The Italian means, of course, buffalo, which is used in agrarian cultivation in Central Italy, but seems out of place in English verse.

Idillio Maremmano

*Al tuo passar, siccome a la sua dea,
Il bel pavon l' occhiuta coda apria
Guardando, e un rauco grido a te mettea.*

*Oh come fredda indi la vita mia,
Come oscura e incresciosa è trapassata!
Meglio era sposar te, bionda Maria!*

*Meglio ir tracciando per la sconsolata
Boscaglia al piano il bufolo disperso,
Che salta fra la macchia e sosta e guata,*

*Che sudar dietro al piccioletto verso!
Meglio oprando obliar, senza indagarlo,
Questo enorme mister de l' universo!*

*Or freddo, assiduo, del pensiero il tarlo
Mi trafora il cervello, ond' io dolente
Misere cose scrivo e tristi parlo.*

Idyll of the Maremma

*Muscles and heart warped in the worn mind's strain,
Wasted my bones by civic ills malign,
Struggling I wrestle, buffeted in vain.*

*O all along the wind the whispering line
Of poplars! O and where the thick trees hide
That rustic churchyard seat on feasts divine*

*Whence bare and brown the ploughed plain stretching wide
And green the hills are seen and green the sea,
Scattered with sails, God's acre set beside!*

*O sweet 'mid fellow souls the gossip free
Upon the quiet noon, and cold nights spent
Gathered around the blazing hearth with glee!*

*O better glory to small sons intent
To speak of feats of strength, and tell once more
The perilous chase and rash entanglement,*

Idillio Maremmano

*Guasti i muscoli e il cuor da la rea mente,
Corrose l' ossa dal malor civile,
Mi divincolo in van rabbiosamente.*

*Oh lunghe al vento sussurranti file
De' pioppi! oh a le bell' ombre in su 'l sacrato
Ne i dí solenni rustico sedile,*

*Onde bruno si mira il piano arato
E verdi quindi i colli e quindi il mare
Sparso di vele, e il campo santo è a lato!*

*O dolce tra gli eguali il novellare
Su 'l quiëto meriggio, e a le rigenti
Sere accogliersi intorno al focolare!*

*O miglior gloria, a i figliuoletti intenti
Narrar le forti prove e le sudate
Cacce ed i perigliosi avvolgimenti*

Idyll of the Maremma

*And with the finger trace on the wild boar
The crooked wound from which he lies supine,
Than to upbraid in ballads rhymed and hoar*

Baseness of Italy and Trissotine.

Idillio Maremmano

*Ed a dito segnar le profundate
Oblique piaghe nel cignal supino,
Che perseguir con frottole rimate*

I vigliacchi d' Italia e Trissottino.

Before San Guido ✓

*The cypresses that slender and lofty to Bolgheri
Run from San Guido, two-columned to the town,
As on a race-course figures tall and airy,
Dancing, came to meet me and looked me up and down.*

*Soon did they remember ; with graceful heads down-bending,
“Welcome” did they murmur, “welcome here again !
Stay a while beside us ; thou know’st the pathway wending,
Cool is the evening, why not here remain ?*

*O, sit thee down ’neath our branches aromatic,
Through them the North wind whistles to the sea ;
Anger is not left in us for the stones erratic
Thou did’st throw in old days that hurt not us nor thee.*

Davanti San Guido

*I cipressi che a Bòlgheri alti e schietti
Van da San Guido in duplice filar,
Quasi in corsa giganti giovinetti
Mi balzarono incontro e mi guardâr.*

*Mi riconobbero, e—Ben torni omai—
Bisbigliaron vèr' me co 'l capo chino—
Perché non scendi? perché non ristai?
Fresca è la sera e a te noto il cammino.*

*Oh sièditi a le nostre ombre odorate
Ove soffia dal mare il maestrale:
Ira non ti serbiam de le sassate
Tue d' una volta: oh, non facean già male!*

Before San Guido

Still do the nightingales build within our shadow . . .

Ah! why so quickly dost thou turn aside?

Sparrows of an evening, rising from the meadow

✓ *Weave wing dances round us. Wilt not with us bide?"*

"O little cypresses, cypresses I treasured,

Faithful companions of a better day,

O with what gladness the hours with you were measured,"

Sadly made I answer—"O gladly would I stay!

But, cypresses, my comrades, you must let me leave you,

That time is past and ended, the merry age did fly!

Could you but know it? . . . Ah! well, I'll not deceive you,

To-day I stand before you a great celebrity.

Greek can I read now and in Latin I am fluent,

And I write and I write, and a great deal else I know.

Cypresses in these days I am no schoolboy truant,

And stones that are real stones no longer do I throw,

Davanti San Guido

Nidi portiamo ancor di rusignoli :

Deh perché fuggi rapido così ?

Le passare la sera intreccian voli

A noi d' intorno ancora. Oh resta qui !—

—Bei cipressetti, cipressetti miei,

Fedeli amici d' un tempo migliore,

Oh di che cuor con voi mi resterei—

Guardando io rispondeva—oh di che cuore !

Ma, cipressetti miei, lasciatem' ire :

Or non è più quel tempo e quell' età.

Se voi sapeste ! . . . via, non fo per dire,

Ma oggi sono una celebrità.

E so legger di greco e di latino,

E scrivo e scrivo, e ho molte altre virtù ;

Non son più, cipressetti, un birichino,

E sassi in specie non ne tiro più.

Before San Guido

*“Especially not at fir-groves!”—But, the tree-tops rocking,
A murmur soft and doubtful through the branches flowed,
And the dying daylight with a radiance mocking
Through the deep green needles like a great rose glowed.*

*Then did I gather that in gracious pity
The sun and the cypresses were looking down on me,
And speedily the murmur slipped into a ditty:
“Long have we known it, poor man that thou must be!*

*“Long have we known it for the wind that borrows
The sighs breathed of men hath told to us thy tale,
How in thy breast are burning endless sorrows,
And nought that thou knowest to ease them can avail.*

*“To us and to the oak-trees, wise in Earth’s emotion,^v
Thou mayest tell thy passion and thy human pain.
Look how still and purple is the ocean,
Gladly the sun goes down to her again!*

Davanti San Guido

*E massime a le piante.—Un mormorio
Pe' dubitanti vertici ondeggiò,
E il dì cadente con un ghigno pio
Tra i verdi cupi roseo brillò.*

*Intesi allora che i cipressi e il sole
Una gentil pietade avean di me,
E presto il mormorio si fe' parole:
—Ben lo sappiamo: un pover uom tu se'.*

*Ben lo sappiamo, e il vento ce lo disse
Che rapisce de gli uomini i sospir,
Come dentro al tuo petto eterne risse
Ardon che tu nè sai nè puoi lenir.*

*{ A le querce ed a noi qui puoi contare
L'umana tua tristezza e il vostro duol.
Vedi come pacato e azzurro è il mare,
Come ridente a lui discende il sol!*

Before San Guido

*" See how the twilight is filled with bird wings flying,
How the sparrows twitter and chatter in the grass !
Thou shalt hear at star-rise nightingales replying,
Rest thee, O rest thee, let evil phantoms pass ;*

*" Phantoms of evil that your hearts long vexing,
Stirred by your aching thoughts that give ' them form,
Glide past you as from graveyards will-o'-the-wisps perplexing
Flit before the traveller 'wilderer in the storm.*

*" Stay ; and to-morrow when the noon has found us
We who in the shadow of the big oaks stand
Prattling to the horses, while around us and around us
Silence lies unbroken on the burning land,*

*" We waving cypresses will chant to thee the chorus
The earth and the sky sing each other day and night,
While nymphs down stealing from the elm-grove o'er us
Softly shall fan thee with their veils snow-white ;*

Davanti San Guido

*E come questo occaso è pien di voli,
Com' è allegro de' passeri il garrire!
A notte canteranno i rusignoli :
Rimanti, e i rei fantasmi oh non seguire ;*

*I rei fantasmi che da' fondi neri
De i cuor vostri battuti dal pensier
Guizzan come da i vostri cimiteri
Putride fiamme innanzi al passegger.*

*Rimanti ; e noi, dimani, a mezzo il giorno,
Che de le grandi querce a l' ombra stan
Ammusando i cavalli e intorno intorno
Tutto è silenzio ne l' ardente pian,*

*Ti canteremo noi cipressi i cori
Che vanno eterni fra la terra e il cielo :
Da quegli olmi le ninfe usciran fuori
Te ventilando co 'l lor bianco velo ;*

Before San Guido

*"And Pan, the eternal, who through the lowly
Plains or on the bare heights wanders where men pine,
The discords, O mortal, of thy cares unholy
Shall resolve for ever in harmony divine."*

*But then,—“Far away over grass-land and harrow
Titti”—I answered—“is waiting; let me go!
Titti is just like a little brown sparrow,
But has no feathers for warmth or for show,*

*“And eats other things than fir-cones for her dinner,
And neither am I a small calf with a bell,
Pulling down the green leaves nor on them growing thinner;
Farewell, my old home! cypresses, farewell!”*

*“What shall we say then where in green grass lying
Thy granny has been buried in the churchyard on the hill?”
And like a black procession they passed me swaying, flying,
Waving and swaying, and muttering fast and still.*

Davanti San Guido

*E Pan, l' eterno che su l' erme alture
A quell' ora e ne i pian solingo va
Il dissidio, o mortal, de le tue cure
Ne la diva armonia sommergerà.—*

*Ed io—Lontano, oltre Apennin, m' aspetta
La Titti—rispondea—; lasciatem' ire.
È la Titti come una passeretta,
Ma non ha penne per il suo vestire.*

*E mangia altro che bacche di cipresso;
Né io sono per anche un manzoniano
Che tiri quattro paghe per il lessò.
Addio cipressi! addio, dolce mio piano!—*

*—Che vuoi che diciam dunque al cimitero
Dove la nonna tua sepolta sta?—
E fuggiano, e pareano un corteo nero
Che brontolando in fretta in fretta va.*

Before San Guido

*Then from the churchyard, past the hilly turning,
Coming through the cypresses, down the leafy lane,
Tall and solemn, clad in robes of mourning,
Granny Lucia I thought I saw again.*

*Madam Lucia in whose utterance mellow,
'Twixt the placid wavering of her curls of snow,
The Tuscan rhythm, clipped by Stenterello¹
In his idle jestings bandied to and fro,*

*Slipped like music falling with the accents ringing
Born in Versilia which my heart doth hold,
Like an ancient carol troubadours went singing,
Full of strength and sweetness, in the days of old.*

*"Granny, O Granny! how the story warmed me!
Tell it to the wise man by much learning crost!
Tell me the story that as a baby charmed me
Of him who went seeking for the love he lost.—*

¹ Character on the Florentine popular stage.

Davanti San Guido

*Di cima al poggio allor, dal cimitero,
Gili de' cipressi per la verde via,
Alta, solenne, vestita di nero
Parvemi riveder nonna Lucia :*

*La signora Lucia, da la cui bocca,
Tra l' ondeggiar de i candidi capelli,
La favella toscana, ch' è sí sciocca *folle*
Nel manzonismo de gli stenterelli,*

*Canora discendea, co 'l mesto accento
De la Versilia che nel cuor mi sta,
Come da un sirventese del trecento,
Piena di forza e di soavità.*

*O nonna, o nonna ! deh com' era bella
Quand' ero bimbo ! ditemela ancor,
Ditela a quest' uom savio la novella
Di lei che cerca il suo perduto amor !*

سبعة

Before San Guido

—“Seven pairs of top-boots have I worn to tatters,
Clamped with heavy iron, streams and ditches leaping;
Seven rods of iron have I broke in shatters,
As I leaned upon them by bogs and quicksands creeping;

“Seven jars of tear-drops like the rain that patters
Bubbled from my heart-springs in seven years of weeping;
And my cry despairing at thy closed door batters,
And the cock is crowing, and thou, my love, art sleeping!”

“Granny, how pretty, and O what sober reason
Runs through the story after many a year!
And that which I sought for, in season, out of season,
Morning and evening, vainly, may be here,

“Under these cypresses where I may not ponder,
May not dare to linger or rest within their grove;
Maybe, O Granny, it's in your graveyard yonder,
Under those other lonely cypresses above?”

Davanti San Guido

—Sette paia di scarpe ho consumate
Di tutto ferro per te ritrovare:
Sette verghe di ferro ho logorate
Per appoggiarmi nel fatale andare:

Sette fiasche di lacrime ho colmate,
Sette lunghi anni, di lacrime amare:
Tu dormi a le mie gridi disperate,
E il gallo canta, e non ti vuoi svegliare.—

Deh come bella, o nonna, e come vera
È la novella ancor! Proprio così.
E quello che cercai mattina e sera
Tanti e tanti anni in vano, è forse qui,

Sotto questi cipressi, ove non spero,
Ove non penso di posarmi più:
Forse, nonna, è nel vostro cimitero
Tra quegli altri cipressi ermo là su.

Before San Guido

*Alas! and alas! the train fled onward rushing
While I was weeping thus within my heart,
And a merry company of young colts came pushing,
Neighing and jostling, to see the wonder start.*

*But a silvery donkey on a thistle grazing,
A thorny, purple thistle, scarce listened to their tread,
He heeded not the clamour, nor all the stir amazing,
But thoughtfully and slowly bit off the thistle's head.*

Davanti San Guido

parting
Ansिमando fuggia la vaporiera

Mentr' io così piangeva entro il mio cuore;
E di polledri una leggiadra schiera *colts gay now*

Annitrendo correa lieta al rumore.
happily

Ma un asin bigio, rosicchiando un cardo

Rosso e turchino, non si scomodò: won't disturbed

Tutto quel chiasso ei non degnò d'un guardo
noise

E a brucar serio e lento seguitò.

graze

kept on

✓ To the Author of the Magician

*O Severino, of thy songs the haven,
Of thy dreams the hid nest well do I know.
Waving with hemp is all the plain that craven
Flees to the curving Reno and the Po.*

*Out of the willows of the swamp low lying
Lazy the wood-cock stirs herself to flight,
And with the wail of one for mercy crying
Passes a troop of pee-wits out of sight*

*Printing its shadow on the waters creeping
Wherein the sluggish eel doth ripening lie.
O love of singing, O 'twixt waking, sleeping,
Madness of dreams lost in immensity.*

All' Autore del *Mago*

*O Severino, de' tuoi canti il nido,
Il covo de' tuoi sogni io ben lo so.
Ondeggiante di canape è l' infido
Piano che sfugge al curvo Reno e al Po.*

*Da gli scopeti de la bassa landa
Pigro il pizzaccherin si rizza a volo:
Con gli strilli di chi mercè dimanda
Levasi de le arzàgole lo stuolo,*

*Stampando l' ombra su per l' acqua lenta
Ove l' anguilla maturando sta.
Oh desio di canzoni, oh sonnolenta
Smania di sogni ne l' immensità!*

To the Author of the Magician

*O, wide on the dykes and banks of the river,
Roseate splendour of the summer eve!
O palpitating where the moon-beams quiver
Robe of soft green the coming spring doth weave.*

*But when the poplars watch the stars high swinging,
Falling enamoured with a long-drawn sigh
And from afar the sound of peasant singing
Comes from the hemp-fields that are loth to die;*

*Then late in August, O Severino,
When for the rain the frogs melodious call,
We will, poets, turn to Alberino,
Lonely and lost in dreams of love for all.*

*And to thy poplars in the still nights glowing,
Faithful, desirous, we will put the plea:
"O lofty poplars, all things seeing, knowing,
O tell us, Biancofiore, where is she?"*

All' Autore del Mago

*Oh largo su gli alti argini del fiume
Risplender rosso de l' estiva sera!
Oh palpitante de la luna al lume
Tenero verdeggiar di primavera!*

*Quando i pioppi contemplano le stelle
Innamorati con lungo sospir,
Ed un lontano suon di romanelle
Viene da' canapai lento a morir!*

*Allor che agosto cada, o Severino,
E chiamin l' acqua le rane canore,
Noi tornerem poeti a l' Alberino,
Tutti solinghi in bei pensier d'amore;*

*Ed a' tuoi pioppi ne le notti chete
Noi chiederem con desiosa fe':
—O alti pioppi che tutto vedete,
Ditene dunque: Biancofiore ov' è?*

To the Author of the Magician

*"Haunts she the river or, on mountains gliding,
Weaves she a chaplet for her head of flowers?
Or in a ditty of Petrarca hiding
Looks she, laughs she, at idle loves of ours?"*

All' Autore del Mago

Siede in riva a un bel fiume? o il colle varca

Tessendo al capo un cerchio agil di fiori?

O dentro una sestina del Petrarca

Beata ride i nostri vani amori?—

The Pass of Roncesvalles

IMITATED FROM THE SPANISH AND PORTUGUESE BALLADS

*“Stand ye, stand ye, knights and horsemen,
Since the King would count ye, stand!”—
So they counted and they counted,
Missed one only ’mong the band;
That was noble Don Beltrano
Famed in battle through the land.
On the plains of Alventosa
Every man behind him shrank,
He alone within the dour pass
In the press of battle sank.*

*Seven times the dice they rattled
Who should seek him through the land,
On that good old man, his father,
Seven times the lot did stand,*

Il Passo di Roncisvalle

DALLO SPAGNOLO E DAL PORTOGHESE

—*Fermi, fermi, cavalieri,*
Ché il re mandavi a contar.—
E contarono e contarono,
Uno sol venne a mancar :
Era questi don Beltrano
Sí gagliardo a battaglia.
Là ne' campi d' Alventosa
Tutti a dosso a lui serrâr :
Sol de' monti al tristo passo
Lo poterono ammazzar.

Tiran sette volte a sorte
Chi dovesse irlo a cercar.
Su 'l buon vecchio di suo padre
Tutt' e sette ricascâr :

The Pass of Roncesvalles

*Three times by an adverse fortune,
Four times by malicious hand.
So he turned his horse's bridle
To the bitter search and far,
Rode by night adown the highway,
And by day where forests are.*

*Went the old man stilly weeping
Silent tears upon the grass;
Of the shepherds he demanded
—"Have ye seen a rider pass?
Rider clad in snowy armour
On a sorrel trapped with brass?"—
—"Rider clad in snowy armour
On a sorrel trapped with brass
Saw we not in all this province,
Saw we never one such pass."—*

*Farther rode he yet and farther
Till he came to Roncesvalles,*

Il Passo di Roncisvalle

*Le tre fu la rea fortuna,
Quattro fu malvagità.
Volge la briglia al cavallo,
A l' amara cerca va:
Va la notte per la strada,
Per la selva il giorno va.*

*Vanne il vecchio e seco piange,
Cheto piange ne l' andar,
A i pastori dimandando
Se han veduto indi passar
Cavaliere d'armi bianche
Sur un sauro a cavalcar.
—Cavaliere d' armi bianche
Sur un sauro a cavalcar
Non vedemmo in queste parti
Non vedemmo alcun passar.—*

*E cavalca via e cavalca
Fin che giunge a Roncisval.*

The Pass of Roncesvalles

*Rode the old man through the slaughter
Through Death's horrid carnival,
Turned and turned so many dead men
That his arms did aching fall.
But he saw not that he sought for,
Saw not horse and saw not man,
He beheld there all the Frenchmen,
But he saw not Don Beltran.*

*Cursed he, as he went, the red wine,
Cursed the bread within the pan,
Bread that's eaten by the Moslem,
Not the bread of Christian man.
Cursed the tree that in the meadow
High above the rest doth stand,
So that all the birds of heaven
Shelter there throughout the land.
—"Joy no more in leaves or branches,
Joy no more, ye feathered band!"*

Il Passo di Roncisvalle

*Fra la strage va il vegliardo,
Fra la strage lento va :
Tanto volta e volta i morti
Che le braccia stracche n' ha :
Non ritrova quel che cerca,
E né meno il suo segnal :
I francesi vide tutti,
Ma non vide don Beltran.*

*Malediva, andando, il vino ;
Malediva, andando, il pan,
Quel che mangia il saracino
E non quello del cristian.
Malediva arbor che nasce
Solo a i campi senza uguat,
Ché del ciel tutti gli uccelli
Vi si vengono a posar,
Né di rami né di foglie
Non lo lascian rallegrar.*

The Pass of Roncesvalles

*Cursed he knight that rides to battle
Who a merry page doth lack ;
Should his lance drop on the highway
There is none to fetch it back.
Should his spurs drop on the highway
There is none to heed the track.
Cursed he woman who hath dangled
But one son upon her arm ;
There is no man to avenge him
Should his foemen work him harm.*

*Saw he then across the far sand
By a valley keeping ward
On a rock a Moslem standing
Lonely, upright, on his guard.
So he spake him fair in Arab,
Well he knew that language hard.
—“ Moor, I pray thee, tell me truly,
Tell me Moor, by Goddes’ grace,*

Il Passo di Roncisvalle

*Maledía cavalier ch' usi
Senza paggio cavalcar :
Se gli cade in via la lancia,
Non ha uno a raccattar :
Se gli cade in via lo sprone,
Non ha uno a ricalzar.
Malediva anche la donna
Che un sol figlio seppe far :
Se l' uccidono i nemici,
Non ha uno a vendicar.*

*A l' uscir del pian sabbioso,
D' una gola in su l' entrar,
Vide un moro a una bertesca
Solo e ritto a vigilar.
Gli parlò l' araba lingua,
Come quei che ben la sa :
—Moro, prègoti per Dio :
Moro, dimmi in verità :*

The Pass of Roncesvalles

*Horseman clad in snowy armour
Saw ye ever in this place?*

*“Saw ye him when cocks were crowing?
Or upon the midnight dark?
If so be ye hold him living
Weight of gold ye shall embark.
If so be ye hold him lifeless
Give him to me stiff and stark,
Since the body that is soulless
Is not worth a single mark.”—
—“Old man, tell me of the rider,
What his crest and what his mark?”*

*—“Sorrel is his horse’s colour
And his weapons snowy are,
And he bears a falcon’s signet,
On the left-hand cheek a scar ;*

Il Passo di Roncisvalle

*Cavaliere d' armi bianche
Vedestú passar di qua?*

*Lo vedesti a notte bruna
O del gallo su 'l cantar?
Ché se tu lo tieni preso,
Peso d' oro te 'n vo dar:
Ché se tu lo tieni morto,
Rendimel per sotterrar;
Poi che corpo senza l' alma
Un denaro più non val.—
—Dimmi, amico, il cavaliere
Dimmi tu che segni ha?—*

*—Le sue armi sono bianche,
Ed è sauro il suo caval.
Ne la guancia destra ha un segno
Che un sparvier lasciato gli ha:*

The Pass of Roncesvalles

*For it bit him as an infant
And he still must wear the chance.
Snowy white a silken streamer
Floats above his lifted lance
Which his high-born dame embroidered
With his lordly cognizance.”—*

*—“ Friend! the Knight you seek is lying
On that strip of marshy land:
Rest his legs within the water,
Rests his body in the sand.
Seven wounds his breast have pierced through,
All the seven mortal are,
Through the first one rides the sunshine,
Through the second moon and star,
In the smallest sits a vulture
Who doth scent his prey afar.”—*

*—“ For this chance my son I blame not,
Neither blame the Moslem band,*

Il Passo di Roncisvalle

*Lo beccò ch' era bambino,
E ne porta anche il signal.
Su la punta de la lancia
Leva un candido zendal:
Ricamòglielo la dama
Tutto di punto real.—*

*—Questo cavaliere, amico,
In quel prato morto sta:
Ha le gambe dentro l' acqua,
Ne la rena il corpo egli ha.
Sette punte egli ha nel petto,
Non si sa qual piú mortal;
Ché per l' una gli entra il sole,
La luna per l' altra va,
Ne la piú piccola stavvi
L' avvoltoio a divorar.—*

*—Non do colpa al mio figliuolo,
Né vo' a' Mori colpa dar ;*

The Pass of Roncesvalles

*But I blame his own good sorrel
Who could not win back to land.”—
O a marvel! Who shall tell it?
Who shall tell or understand?
Spake half-dead the gallant sorrel
Lying there across the sand,
—“Blame not me, O noble master,
Who could not win back to land.*

*“Full three times I backed to bear him
Safely from the perilous bar ;
Full three times he urged me onward
In the eager quest of war.
Full three times my girths he loosened,
Loosed three times my saddle-band,
And the third time, wounded, dying,
Backward fell I on the strand !”—*

Il Passo di Roncisvalle

*Do la colpa al suo cavallo,
Che no 'l seppe ritornar.—
O miracol! chi 'l direbbe,
Chi 'l potrebbe raccontar?
Il cavallo mezzo morto
Cosí prese a favellar:
—Non mi dare a me la colpa,
Che no 'l seppi ritornar.*

*Ben tre volte trassi a dietro
Per poterlo in salvo trar:
Tre mi diè di sprone e briglia
Pe 'l desío di battaglia,
E tre apersemi le cigne,
Allargommi il pettoral:
A la terza caddi a terra
Con questa piaga mortal.—*

ODI BARBARE

1877-1889

Lines on Rome ✓

*Thee wreathed with blossom, purple engarlanded,
April beheld come forth on the dreaming hills,
Forth from the slope Romulus furrowed,
Gazing austere on pastures barren ;*

*Thee after age-long force of the centuries
April illumines, mighty, majestic,
Italy greets thee, the sunlight greets,
Flower of our people, O Rome immortal.*

*What though no longer climbs to the Capitol
With priests the virgin, silently following,
Neither the four white horses bearing
Down Via Sacra the weighty triumph.*

Nell' Annuale Della Fondazione di Roma

*Te redimito di fior purpurei
april te vide su 'l colle emergere
da 'l solco di Romolo torva
riguardante su i selvaggi piani :*

*te dopo tanta forza di secoli
aprile irraggia, sublime, massima,
e il sole e l' Italia saluta
te, Flora di nostra gente, o Roma.*

*Se al Campidoglio non piú la vergine
tacita sale dietro il pontefice
né piú per Via Sacra il trionfo
piega i quattro candidi cavalli,*

Lines on Rome

*Here where the Forum slumbers thy loneliness
Conquers all sound and greater then glory is ;
Far o'er the world that which is gentle,
Great or sublime to this hour is Roman.*

*Hail, Rome divine ! who knows not thy spirit hath
Known winter's meaning, cold mist surrounding him,
Sprung from his dull bosom a forest
Twines of barbarian thorn and bramble.*

*Hail, Rome divine ! bowed low to the rudiments
Here where the Forum slumbers, I, following
Thy scattered stones, bend o'er them weeping,
Country and goddess and holy mother.*

*For thee became I Italy's citizen,
✓ Poet for thee, O Mother of multitudes,
Who o'er the world thy soul hast sent forth,
Giving to Italy glory long thine.*

Roma

*questa del Fòro tuo solitudine
ogni rumore vince, ogni gloria,
e tutto che al mondo è civile,
grande, augusto, egli è romano ancora.*

*Salve, dea Roma ! Chi disconósceti
cerchiato ha il senno di fredda tenebra,
e a lui nel reo cuore germoglia
torpida la selva di barbarie.*

*Salve, dea Roma ! Chinato a i ruderi
del Fòro, io seguo con dolci lacrime
e adoro i tuoi sparsi vestigi,
patria, diva, santa genitrice.*

*Son cittadino per te d' Italia,
per te poeta, madre de i popoli,
che desti il tuo spirito al mondo
che Italia improntasti di tua gloria.*

Lines on Rome

*Lo ! where to thee she turns whom thou madest one,
Free folk uniting, Italy calling her,
Turns her to thee, seeking thy bosom,
Looking for light in thine eagle glances.*

*Thou from the fateful hill by the motionless
Forum thy marble arms holding forth to her
Leadest the daughter, fraught with freedom,
Through broken columns and waiting arches :*

*Arches awaiting triumphs processional,
No more of kings nor emperors conquering,
Neither of coiled, rivetting fetters
Binding men's limbs on ivory chariots.*

*Nay, but thy triumph, people of Italy,
Over the dark age, age of barbarians,
Slaying the monsters, justice dealing
Justice and freedom to all the peoples.*

Roma

*Ecco, a te questa, che tu di libere
genti facesti nome uno, Italia,
ritorna, e s' abbraccia al tuo petto,
affisa ne' tuoi d' aquila occhi.*

*E tu dal colle fatal pe 'i tacito
Fòro le braccia porgi marmoree,
a la figlia liberatrice
additando le colonne e gli archi :*

*gli archi che nuovi trionfi aspettano
non piú di regi, non piú di cesari,
e non di catene attorcenti
braccia umane su gli eburnei carri ;*

*ma il tuo trionfo, popol d' Italia,
su l' età nera, su l' età barbara,
su i mostri onde tu con serena
giustizia farai franche le genti.*

Lines on Rome

*Italy, Rome ! that day in serenity
Shall o'er the Forum dawn and the carols of
Glory, of Glory, Glory endless,
Ring in the infinite deep of heaven.*

Roma

*O Italia, o Roma! quel giorno, placido
tornerà il cielo su 'l Fòro, e cantici
di gloria, di gloria, di gloria
correran per l' infinito azzurro.*

From "By the Sources of Clitumnus"

*Still from the mountain where the darkly waving
Ashes are murmuring to the winds and fragrance
Haunts the far breezes freshened with the woodland
Salvias and wild thyme,*

*Through the wet evening to thee, O Clitumnus,
Come down the long herds and the child of Umbria,
Kneeling, doth dip within thy shining fountains
Soft ewes reluctant,*

*While from the drained breast of the barefoot mother,
Sitting and singing by the humble homestead,
Toward him the babe just suckled turns his round face
Milky and smiling;*

Alle Fonti Del Clitumno

*Ancor dal monte, che di fóschi ondeggia
frassini al vento mormoranti e lunge
per l' aure odora fresco di silvestri
salvie e di timi,*

*scendon nel vespero umido, o Clitumno,
a te le greggi: a te l' umbro fanciullo
la riluttante pecora ne l' onda
immerge, mentre*

*ver' lui dal seno de la madre adusta,
che scalza siede al casolare e canta,
una poppante volgesi e dal viso
tondo sorride:*

From "By the Sources of Clitumnus"

*Pensive the father with the skin of wild kids
Wound o'er his sinews like a faun of old time
Guideth the painted wagon and the strength of
Beautiful oxen.*

*Beautiful oxen with the lusty shoulders,
High on their heads the curvèd horns sustaining,
With the eyes gentle, snowy, loved long since by
Mantuan Virgil.*

.

Alle Fonti Del Clitumno

*pensoso il padre, di caprine pelli
l' anche ravvolto come i fauni antichi,
regge il dipinto plaustro e la forza
de' bei giovenchi,*

*de' bei giovenchi dal quadrato petto,
erti su 'l capo le lunate corna,
dolci ne gli occhi, nivei, che il mite
Virgilio amava.*

.

Primo Vere ✓

*Lo! now the spring-tide from the arms of winter
Slips, and yet naked on the wind ungentle
Pauses and trembles and in tears the sun breaks,
Limpidly shining, O Lalage.*

*Out of snow cradles do the flow'rs awaken,
Lifting in wonder tiny eyes up skyward;
Ah! in their glances tremulously wonder
Shades of a dream-world, O Lalage.*

*Sleeping through winter underneath the stainless
Sheet the snow weaveth lay the flowers, dreaming
Dreams of dawns rose-lit and of tempered sunshine,
Yea, and of thy face, O Lalage.*

Primo Vere

*Ecco : di braccio al pigro verno sciogliesi
ed ancor trema nuda al rigid' aere
la primavera : il sol tra le sue lacrime
limpido brilla, o Lalage.*

*Da lor culle di neve i fior si svegliano
e curiosi al ciel gli occhietti levano :
in quelli sguardi vagola una tremula
ombra di sogno, o Lalage.*

*Nel sonno de l' inverno sotto il candido
lenzuolo de la neve i fior sognarono ;
sognaron l' albe roride ed i tepidi
soli e il tuo viso, o Lalage.*

Primo Vere

Lost in the slumber of the hidden spirit

Where had my thought flown ! O and why does Spring come

Through her tears smiling at thy beauty radiant

Tearfully smiling, O Lalage ?

✓

Primo Vere

*Ne l' addormito spirito che sognano
i miei pensieri? A tua bellezza candida
perché mesta sorride tra le lacrime
la primavera, o Lalage?*

Lines on the Death of G. P.

*Now that the snows are gathering,
Shrouding the earth and all souls to burial,
And that of life the murmuring
Sound on the winterly wind sinks sullenly,*

*Fadest thou, spirit exquisite,
Maybe the cloud will receive thee, silvery,
There in the vesper solitude
Failing with thee in the twilit mystery.*

*We when the warm sun limpidly
Shines and desire to the heart steals languorous
And, with the blossoms opening,
Blue-eyed returns to the world Persephone*

Ave

IN MORTE DI G. P.

*Or che le nevi premono,
lenzuol funereo, le terre e gli animi,
e de la vita il fremito
foco per l' aura vernal disperdesi,*

*tu passi, o dolce spirito :
forse la nuvola ti accoglie pallida
là per le solitudini
del vespro e tenue teco dileguasi.*

*Noi, quando a' soli tepidi
un desio languido ricerca l' anime
e co i fiori che sbocciano
torna Persefone da gli occhi ceruli,*

Lines on the Death of G. P.

*We will not deem thee lost to us
O thou beloved! Under the tremulous
White moon of April glimmering
Fleeting and dear thou wilt greet us silently.*

Ave

*noi penseremo, o tenero,
a te non reduce. Sotto la candida
luna d' april trascorrere
vedrem la imagine cara accennandone.*

RIME E RITMI

↳ Piedmont

*High on the sharp peaks of the gleaming mountains
Leats the wild chamois and the crashing ice-fall
Rained from the rocks of mighty lying glaciers,
Rolls through the forest :*

*But in the silence of diffused azure
Spreading his wings forth to the sun, the eagle
Wheels in wide circles, in dark flight and solemn,
Slowly descending.*

*Hail to thee, Piedmont ! Unto thee with music,
Far off resounding, grave, and mixed with sorrow,
Like the songs epic of thy valiant people,
Rivers are flowing.*

Piemonte

*Su le dentate scintillanti vette
salta il camoscio, tuona la valanga
da' ghiacci immani rotolando per le
selve croscianti :*

*ma da i silenzi de l' effuso azzurro
esce nel sole l' aquila, e distende
in tarde ruote digradanti il nero
volo solenne.*

*Salve, Piemonte ! A te con melodia
mesta da lungi risonante, come
gli epici canti del tuo popol bravo,
scendono i fiumi.*

Piedmont

*Flow full and rapid and with rhythm daring,
Even as thine hundred bold battalions come they,
Down in the valley raying round with glory,
Villa and city :*

*Ancient Aosta who the walls of Cæsar
Wears as a mantle, in the alpine gateway
Raising above her mediæval halls the
Arch of Augustus ;*

*Beauteous Ivrea on her red towers gazing
Mirrored within the turquoise breast of Dora,
Dreamily gazing, all around the shade of
King Arduino ;¹*

*Biella 'twixt mountains and the green plain lying,
Lying and looking on the fruitful valley,
Boasting of arms, of ploughshares and of chimneys
Hot with their labour.*

¹ *Ardoïn, Marquis of Ivrea, elected to the Kingdom of Pavia on the death of the Emperor, Otto III.*

Piemonte

*Scendono pieni, rapidi, gagliardi,
come i tuoi cento battaglioni, e a valle
cercan le deste a ragionar di gloria
ville e cittadi :*

*la vecchia Aosta di cesaree mura
ammantellata, che nel varco alpino
èleva sopra i barbari manieri
l' arco d' Augusto :*

*Ivrea la bella che le rosse torri
specchia sognando a la cerulea Dora
nel largo seno, fòsca intorno è l' ombra
di re Arduino :*

*Biella tra 'l monte e il verdeggiar de' piani
lieta guardante l' ubere convalle,
ch' armi ed aratri e a l' opera fumanti
camini ostenta :*

Piedmont

Patient and strong, Cuneo, farther smiling

Gentle Mondovi on the sloping hill-side ;

✓ *Then Aleramo 'mid her fields exultant,
Castles and vineyards ;*

And from Superga in the choir rejoicing

✓ *Of the vast range of Alps the royal Turin
Crownèd, victorious, and beside her Asti,
City republic.*

Proud of the Gothic slaughter and the might of

Frederick's¹ anger, from her sounding river

*Even she, Piedmont, gave to thee the newborn
Song of Alfieri.*

Came he that great one like the bird of battle

Whence he was named,² and o'er the lowly country

Flying wide-wingèd, fiery, unremitting,

“ Italia, Italia,”

¹ Barbarossa, “In the contest by which Frederick is chiefly known to history, he is commonly painted as the foreign tyrant, the forerunner of the Austrian oppressor, crushing under the hoofs of his cavalry the home of freedom and industry” (Bryce, “Holy Roman Empire,” page 75 (7th edition)). This I take to be the meaning of the line, but of course I may be mistaken. Carducci has no note.

² “Alfiere” means in Italian an ensign.

Piemonte

*Cuneo possente e paziente, e al vago
declivio il dolce Mondovì ridente,
e l' esultante di castella e vigne
suol d' Aleramo ;*

*e da Superga nel festante coro
de le grandi Alpi la regal Torino
incoronata di vittoria, ed Asti
repubblicana.*

*Fiera di strage gotica e de l' ira
di Federico, dal sonante fiume
ella, o Piemonte, ti donava il carme
novo d' Alfieri.*

*Venne quel grande, come il grande augello
ond' ebbe nome ; e a l' umile paese
sopra volando, fulvo, irrequieto,
—Italia, Italia—*

Piedmont

*Cried he aloud in ears unused to hearing
Cried to hearts idle, unto souls low lying,
"Italia, Italia!" made reply the tombs of
Arqua, Ravenna.¹*

*Down o'er the doomed peninsula's long grave-yard,
Under his flight the bones of dead men creaking
Moaned as they strove their nakedness to arm with
Fury and iron.*

*"Italia, Italia!" And the dead forthcoming,
Surged upward singing crying out for battle,
And unto Death a pale-browed monarch rising
Drew from his bosom*

*Flashing a sword forth.² O that year of wonder,
Spring of our country, O those days of all days,
Last fairest days of all that May of blossom,
O the triumphant*

¹ Petrarch's and Dante's.

² Charles Albert declared war against Austria in the spring of 1848. On May 30th he was victorious at Goïto, taking Peschiera, and on June 28th Lombardy was joined to Sardinia, followed, a few days later, by Venice. But on the 26th of July he was defeated by Radetzky, and on August 5th the Sardinians at Milan capitulated to the Austrian general. Hostilities were resumed on March 12, 1849, and were quickly followed by Austrian successes. Radetzky occupied Mortara on the 21st and, on the 23rd, Novara placed Lombardy once more in the hands of Austria. Charles Albert abdicated on the same day and withdrew to Portugal where, three months later, he died (July 28, 1849).

Piemonte

*egli gridava a' dissueti orecchi,
a i pigri cuori, a gli animi giacenti :
—Italia, Italia— rispondeano l' urne
d' Arquà e Ravenna :*

*e sotto il volo scricchiolaron l' ossa
sé ricercanti lungo il cimitero
de la fatal penisola a vestirsi
d' ira e di ferro.*

*—Italia, Italia !— E il popolo de' morti
surse cantando a chiedere la guerra ;
e un re a la morte nel pallor del viso
sacro e nel cuore*

*trasse la spada. Oh anno de' portenti,
oh primavera de la patria, oh giorni,
ultimi giorni del fiorente maggio,
oh trionfante*

Piedmont

*Sound of the first-born victory Italian
Striking the heart of me a boy! I therefore,
Italy's songster in her summer season,
Wearing my grey locks,*

*Sing to thee now, O king of my fresh spring-time,
King for so many years accursed and wept o'er
Passing away with hands upon a sword clasped,
Roughly the hair-cloth*

*Drawn o'er thy body, O Italian Hamlet!
Flying before the fire and steel of Piedmont,
Force of Cuneo, daring of Aosta,
Vanished the oppressor.*

*Languidly rolling the last cannon's echo
Died far away behind the flight of Austria,
Down to the hanging, golden clouds of sunset
Rode the King onward;*

Piemonte

*suon de la prima italica vittoria
che mi percosse il cuor fanciullo ! Ond' io,
vate d' Italia a la stagion più bella,
in grige chiome*

*oggi ti canto, o re de' miei verd' anni,
re per tant' anni bestemmiato e pianto,
che via passasti con la spada in pugno
ed il cilicio*

*al cristian petto, italo Amleto. Sotto
il ferro e il fuoco del Piemonte, sotto
di Cuneo 'l nerbo e l' impeto d' Aosta
sparve il nemico.*

*Languido il tuon de l' ultimo cannone
dietro la fuga austriaca moria :
il re a cavallo discendeva contra
il sol cadente :*

Piedmont

*Unto the riders hastening forth to greet him,
Foyful of smoke, of powder, and of victory,
Rode he and lifted a white paper, saying:
"Ours is Peschiera!"*

*O from the brave breasts of our noble grandsires,
Flinging on high their banners soiled of battle,
Rose single, swelling, but one cry: "God save thee,
Italy's chosen!"*

*Burning with glory, rosy in the sunset,
Lombardy's plain lay far and wide before them;
Swayed the Virgilian lake even as the bridal
Veil of a maiden*

*Sways at the kiss of promised love, half parted;
High on the saddle sat the king unmoving,
Pale, gazing outward, seeing there the shadow
Of Trocadero.*

Piemonte

*a gli accorrenti cavalieri in mezzo,
di fumo e polve e di vittoria allegri,
trasse, ed, un foglio dispiegato, disse
resa Peschiera.*

*Oh qual da i petti, memori de gli avi,
alte ondeggiando le sabaude insegne,
surse fremente un solo grido: Viva
il re d' Italia!*

*Arse di gloria, rossa nel tramonto,
l' ampia distesa del lombardo piano;
palpitò il lago di Virgilio, come
velo di sposa*

*che s' apre al bacio del promesso amore:
pallido, dritto su l' arcione, immoto,
gli occhi fissava il re: vedeva l' ombra
del Trocadero.*

Piedmont

*Waited for him the wintry dark Novara.
And the last close of wanderings sad Oporto !
O lone and quiet, 'mid thy chestnut branches,
Douro's white villa,*

*That where the ringing great Atlantic fronts thee,
Down by the river where camellias blossom,
Harbour didst give in thine indifferent calm to
World-weary sorrow !*

*There was his passing. In the dusk of conscience,
Lying between two worlds a wondrous vision
Lighted the chamber where the king lay dying :
Nizza's fair sailor*

*From Janus' temple on the outrage spurring
Borne of France thither, and around him glowing,
Carbuncle flashing in the fiery sunlight,
Italy's heart-blood.¹*

¹ Garibaldi's defence of Rome in 1849.

Piemonte

*E lo aspettava la brumal Novara
e a' tristi errori mèta ultima Oporto.
oh sola e cheta in mezzo de' castagni
villa del Douro,*

*che in faccia il grande Atlantico sonante
a i lati ha il fiume fresco di camelie,
e albergò ne la indifferente calma
tanto dolore !*

*Sfaceasi ; e nel crepuscolo de i sensi
tra le due vite al re davanti corse
una miranda vision : di Nizza
il marinaio*

*biondo che dal Gianicolo spronava
contro l' oltraggio gallico : d' intorno
splendeagli, fiamma di piropo al sole,
l' italo sangue.*

Piedmont

*From the spent eyelids of the king a tear slid;
Slowly the shadow of a smile crept o'er them.
Then from on high a flight of souls descending
Girdled his death-bed.*

*First of all there, O noble land of Piedmont,
Who at Sfacteria sleep and who first planted
In Alessandria thy fair flag, Santorre
Di Santarosa.*

*These all together bore to God the soul of
Carlo Alberto. "Lo! where comes the king, Lord,
Who for this wasted and for this was stricken,
Lord God Almighty,*

*"Now hath he died even as we also died for
Italy. Give to him for this his country.
Give dead and living, by the blood that smoketh
O'er fields so many,*

Piemonte

*Su gli occhi spenti scese al re una stilla,
lenta errò l' ombra d' un sorriso. Allora
venne da l' alto un vol di spirti, e cinse
del re la morte.*

*Innanzi a tutti, o nobile Piemonte,
quei che a Sfacteria dorme e in Alessandria
diè a l' aure primo il tricolor, Santorre
di Santarosa.*

*E tutti insieme a Dio scortaron l' alma
di Carl' Alberto.—Eccoti il re, Signore,
che ne disperse, il re che ne percosse.
ora, o Signore,*

*anch' egli è morto, come noi morimmo,
Dio, per l' Italia. Rendine la patria.
A i morti, a i vivi, pe 'l fumante sangue
da tutt' i campi,*

Piedmont

*“ By the great sorrow which the palace levels
With the low cabin, by the glory, Lord God,
Which in the years was, by the anguish, Lord God,
Which at this hour is,*

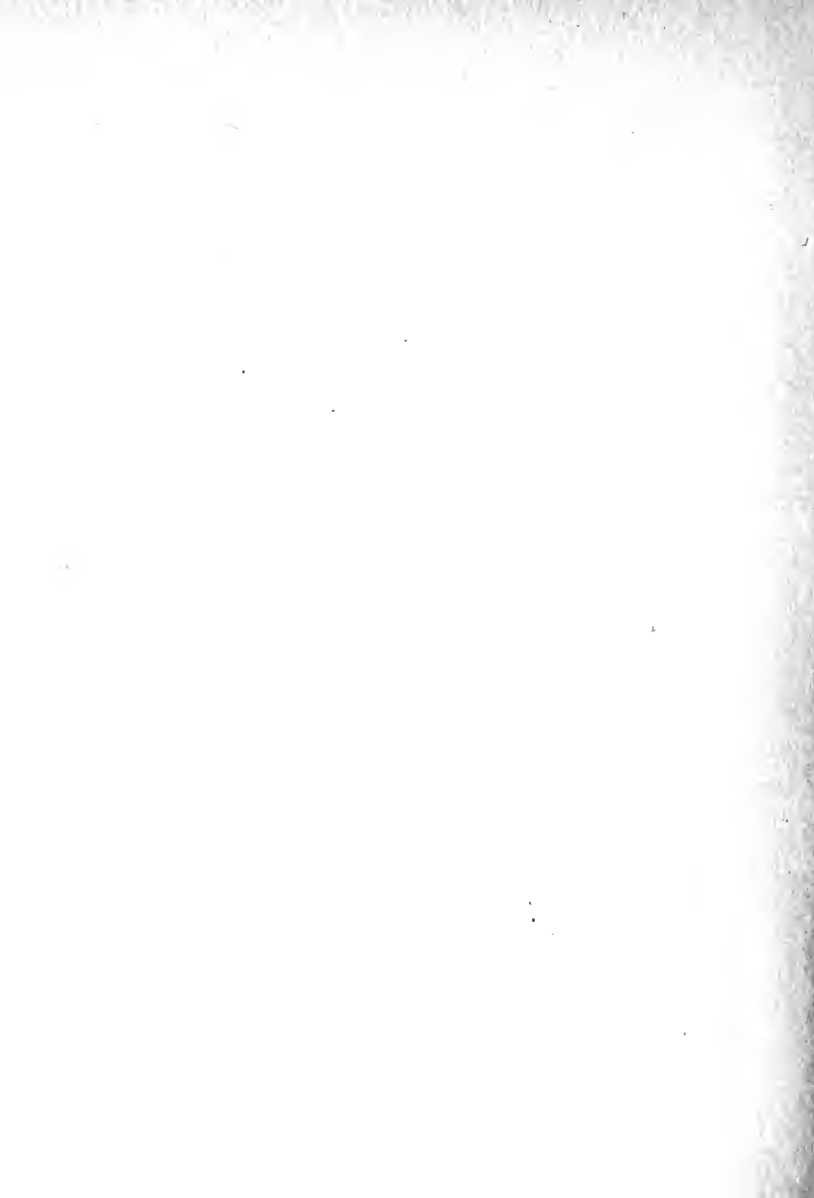
*“ To that heroic dust in passion trembling.
To this angelic light in peace exulting,
Give, Lord, a country; Italy, O God, give
To the Italians ! ”*

Piemonte

*per il dolore che le regge agguaglia
a le capanne, per la gloria, Dio,
che fu ne gli anni, pe 'l martirio, Dio,
che è ne l' ora,*

*a quella polve eroica fremente,
a questa luce angelica esultante,
rendi la patria, Dio; rendi l' Italia
a gl' italiani.*

CERESOLE REALE, 27 luglio 1890.



The Church of Polenta

AUTHOR'S NOTE.

The Church of San Donato in Polenta, mentioned in a document of 976, was built in the eighth century. A few years ago a movement in favour of pulling it down and building a new one in its place might have been carried if Don Luigi Zattini . . . priest, had not warned the Cavalier Antonio Santarelli, inspector of monuments and excavations in the province of Forlì . . . At a sitting of the Provincial Council (December 20, 1889) the expense of the Polenta church being considered and certain members arguing that public money should not be wasted on preserving churches when it would be better to pull down those in good repair, Aurelio Saffi, who presided, said: " . . . What Italian would not wish to preserve and honour a church in which Dante L prayed?" Then all those Republicans voted the funds for San Donato di Polenta. The roof, middle and right aisles, the central apse and the crypt were restored; there remains the restoration of the right apse and the rebuilding of the bell-tower.

From an article in the Cittadino of Cesena (June 13, 1897), I give here, in explanation of my verses, a few sentences. "The pillars of the church, large and round, in alternate layers of brick and concrete, are crowned with capitals which form the most important and characteristic part of the historic monument. They are . . . sculptured in local stone, some cubiform, some cut into dice, with broken fronts variously ornamented with conventional foliage, geometric designs, curiously twisted supports, grotesque figures of monsters and animals, all in low and rude relief. Certain figures, rather of apes than of men, a kind of hyppogriff, and a horrible sea-crab especially arrest attention. Of the castle nothing remains but broken ruins, on which rests the squalid house of a labourer. Was Dante at the Polentano castle? Did he pray in the little church? No document records it, but none make it unlikely. . . . Legend, which sometimes errs but often remakes and reintegrates history, believes it, and says also that Francesca . . . climbed up here, giving to a cypress which stands solitary on one of these hills, dominating the whole of the surrounding valley and visible from a great distance . . . the poetic title of 'Cipresso di Francesca.'"

The Church of Polenta

*Lonely and swaying, o'er the green hills rising,
Waves as though calling the old hoary cypress.
Haply Francesca's¹ flashing eyes turned hither
Wistfully smiling?*

*Steeplly the cliff falls threatening nought: the boatman,
Thoughtful, doth mark it, and yet, upward gazing,
Bent to the winged oars, swiftly skims the night-veiled
Adria: yonder*

*Smokes the flat house-top where the peasant poureth
Golden grain downward to the fiery copper,
There where old Guido's eagle, sternly brooding,
Nested aforetime.*

¹ Francesca, called from her ill-starred marriage "da Rimini," was daughter to Guido da Polenta (mentioned v. 3). The Polentani (mentioned again v. 6) lords of Ravenna and Cervia bore for arms a red and white eagle (see "Inferno," xxvii. 41). With them Dante is thought to have found a last refuge.—TRANSLATOR'S NOTE.

La Chiesa di Polenta

*Agile e solo vien di colle in colle
quasi accennando l' arduo cipresso.
Forse Francesca temprò qui li ardenti
occhi al sorriso?*

*Sta l' erta rupe, e non minaccia: in alto
guarda, e ripensa, il barcaiol, torcendo
l' ala de' remi in fretta dal notturno
Adria: sopra*

*fuma il comignol del villan, che giallo
mesce frumento nel fervente rame
là dove torva l' aquila del vecchio
Guido covava.*

The Church of Polenta

*Beauty is but the shadow of a blossom,
O'er her the white moth poesy doth flutter ;
Power but the echo of a trumpet falling,
Lost i' the valley.*

*Time's feet have conquered and the silence conquers
Out of the flood and ebb of life emerges,
Light of a beacon for the years that follow,
Thought and thought only.*

*Here doth the church stand. Here she stood while nameless
Dwelt, slaves forgotten, 'mid the Roman people
• They of Polenta. Fled the years, and Dante
Made them immortal.*

*Maybe that Dante here hath kneeled? The lofty
Brow that had gazed so near on God he buried
In his hands, weeping for his well-belovèd
Great San Giovanni ;¹*

¹ Florence.

La Chiesa di Polenta

*Ombra d' un fiore è la beltà, su cui
bianca farfalla poesia volteggia :
eco di tromba che si perde a valle
è la potenza.*

*Fuga di tempi e barbari silenzi
vince e dal flutto de le cose emerge
sola, di luce a' secoli affluenti
faro, l' idea.*

*Ecco la chiesa. E surse ella che ignoti
servì morian tra la romana plebe
quei che fûr poscia i Polentani e Dante
fecegli eterni.*

*Forse qui Dante inginocchiossi ? L' alta
fronte che Dio mirò da presso chiusa
entro le palme, ei lacrimava il suo
bel San Giovanni ;*

The Church of Polenta

*While the sun flashing from the mighty forest
Broke over ocean. On the banished eyelids
Beat in light dazzling wingèd hosts of radiance,
Paradise-wafted,*

*And from the sweep of lowly vaulted arches
Opening with white wing to the golden sunrise,
Joyful the psalm In exitu was ringing
Israel de Aegypto.¹*

*O ye Italians, in your lives so varied
Where your night lightens and a spirit wanders
Out of the old years stealing, come and hither
Look on your poet.*

*Once on the yawning graves in grey-haired wisdom
Old men prostrated in these churches ancient,
Scattering ashes on their heads and thin locks
Grizzled and flowing,*

¹ *Purgatorio, II.*

La Chiesa di Polenta

*e folgorante il sol rompea da' vasti
boschi su 'l mar. Del profugo a la mente
ospiti batton lucidi fantasmi
dal paradiso :*

*mentre, dal giro de' brevi archi l' ala
candida schiusa verso l' orïente,
giubila il salmo In exitu cantando
Israel de Aegypto.*

*Itala gente da le molte vite,
dove che albeggi la tua notte e un' ombra
vagoli spersa de' vecchi anni, vedi
ivi il poeta.*

*Ma su' dischiusi tumuli per quelle
chiese prostesi in grigio sago i padri,
sparsi di turpe cenere le chiome
nere fluenti*

The Church of Polenta

*To the Byzantine crucifix with tortured
Limbs and eyes sunken, kneeling on the pavement,
Cried out for mercy on the heir of ages,
Rome and her people.*

*Thrust from protruding capitals forms horrid,
Dim recollections of an Argive chisel,
Spasms and nightmares, cruel and convulsive,
Dreams of the Northern,*

*Imaginations bestial and degenerate
Vented of Orient, in the lamp's wan flicker
Twisted, contorted, in obscene embraces,
Spat in derision*

*Sulphur and hell-fire on the flock prostrated:
Near the font lurking a diminished devil,
Ruddy and crook-horned, sat and, looking on them,
Grinned as a dog grins.*

La Chiesa di Polenta

*al bizantino crocefisso, atroce
ne gli occhi bianchi livida magrezza,
chieser mercé de l' alta stirpe e de la
gloria di Roma.*

*Da i capitelli orride forme intruse
a le memorie di scalpelli argivi,
sogni efferati e spasimi del bieco
settentrione,*

*imbestiati degeneramenti
de l' oriente, al guizzo de la fioca
lampada, in turpe abbracciamento attorti,
zolfo ed inferno*

*goffi sputavan su la prosternata
gregge: di dietro al battistero un fulvo
picciol cornuto diavolo guardava
e subsannava.*

The Church of Polenta

*And o'er the land the winter of barbarians
Swept hill and valley. Swiftly darts the rapid
Vessel black-painted on the wind, a genius
Howling foremost ;*

*Dart the flames upward, and the wrath of Odin
Breaks over smiling shores and glimm'ring cities,
Plunging their white arms in the wavelit mirrors
Shaken of ocean.*

*Ah me ! the tempest of wild colts unbroken,
Graceless, dishevelled, and the fearful riders
Pass : and behind them goes the merry reaper,
Death, shrilly laughing.*

*Mercy, O Lora ! the sepulchres wide yawning
Open black mouths : and bones of blessed martyrs,
Flung to the wind's edge lie in storm and sunshine,
Naked and wailing.*

La Chiesa di Polenta

*Fuori stridea per monti e piani il verno
de la barbarie. Rapido saetta
nero vascello, con i venti e un dio
ch' ulula a poppa,*

*fuoco saetta ed il furor d' Odino
su le arridenti di due mari a specchio
moli e cittadi a Enosigeo le braccia
bianche porgenti.*

*Ahi, ahi! Procella d' ispide polledre
àvare ed unne e cavalier tremendi
sfilano: dietro spigolando allegra
ride la morte.*

*Gesú, Gesú! Spalancano la tetra
bocca i sepolcri: a' venti a' nemi al sole
piangono rese anch' esse de' beati
màrtiri l' ossa.*

The Church of Polenta

*While the supplanter of the bearded chieftain
Backward returning from exempted castles,
Reliquies, ashes, desert-lands divideth,
Straight with his halberd.¹*

*Slaves who were stricken and despoiled, to you now
Country, church, homestead, tomb, to you are given ;
These alone gained ye, ye that have forgotten,
Here seeing nothing.*

*Ay ! for here, stricken and despoiled they also,
Strikers and spoilers one day draw together.
Even as in the foaming of the vintage
Bubbles the wine-vat,*

*And of Italian hills the white and purple
Grapes spilt and broken and by feet down-trodden,
In their undoing make the strong and subtle
Wine of the valley ;*

¹ The meaning is obscure, but seems to refer to the partition of the lands of Italy by Theodoric the Goth, A.D. 493. Theodoric was the conqueror of Odoacer, the first barbarian king of Italy, who had himself overcome Augustulus, the last Emperor of the West (Gibbon, 36-9).—TRANSLATOR'S NOTE.

La Chiesa di Polenta

*E quel che avanza il Vinilo barbuto,
ridiscendendo da i castelli immuni,
sparte—reliquie, cenere, deserto—
con l' alabarda.*

*Schiavi percossi e dispogliati, a voi
oggi la chiesa, patria, casa, tomba,
unica avanza: qui dimenticate,
qui non vedete.*

*E qui percossi e dispogliati anch' essi
i percussori e spogliatori un giorno
vengano. Come ne la spumeggiante
vendemmia il tino*

*ferve, e de' colli italici la bianca
uva e la nera calpestata e franta
sé disfacendo il forte e redolente
vino matura ;*

The Church of Polenta

*So, in the vision of our God the Avenger ·
And the Forgiver, conquerors and conquered,
Those who in peace were reconciled before Him,
Brought by the Queen's prayer,¹*

*Those whom the great Pope grudged unto the servile
Stocks as he thundered in decretals Roman,
Breathing new love and strength long since begotten,
Make up the People.*

*Hail to thee leaning on thy hillside terrace
'Twixt Bertinoro's gleaming height and that sweet
Plain that Cesena² to the sea commandeth,
Mistress of valour,*

*Hail, little church of this my song, the ancient
Mother long silent ! O ye new-born people,
All ye Italians in your lives so varied,
Give her the long-lost*

¹ Gregory the Great persuaded the Lombard queen, Theodelinda, to propagate the Nicene faith among her subjects tainted with Arianism. The next lines would seem to refer to the famous story of the Anglo-Saxons in the slave-market at Rome.

TRANSLATOR'S NOTE.

² "Inferno," xxvii. 52.

La Chiesa di Polenta

*qui, nel conspetto a Dio vendicatore
e perdonante, vincitori e vinti,
quei che al Signor pacificò, pregando,
Teodolinda,*

*quei che Gregorio invidiava a' servi
ceppi tonando nel tuo verbo, o Roma,
memore forza e amor novo spiranti
fanno il Comune.*

*Salve, affacciata al tuo balcon di poggi
tra Bertinoro alto ridente e il dolce
pian cui sovrasta fino al mar Cesena
donna di prodi,*

*salve, chiesetta del mio canto ! A questa
madre vegliarda, o tu rinnovellata
itala gente da le molte vite,
rendi la voce*

The Church of Polenta

*Voice of her pleading; is the bell not ringing,
Calling, insisting? from the lifted belfry
Peals o'er the cornland unto distant summits
Ave Maria.*

*Ave Maria! When across the breezes
Sighs the low greeting, little humble people
Bare their heads meekly, and with bowed heads listen
Dante, Childe Harold.¹*

*Then doth a flute-born melody pass slowly,
Drifting unseen between the earth and heaven,
Haply of spirits that have been, that be still,
Yea, and that shall be.*

*Blessed oblivion of the life of burden,
Pensive sighs breathèd after easeful quiet,
Longings unbidden and desire of weeping,
Into the heart steal.*

¹ Carducci uses Childe Harold as a name for Byron. The lines beginning "*Ave Maria! blessed be the hour!*" occur in "*Don Juan*," canto iii. st. 102 et seq. See for Dante, "*Purgatorio*," canto viii. lines 1-6.—TRANSLATOR'S NOTE.

La Chiesa di Polenta

*de la preghiera : la campana squilli
ammonitrice : il campanil risorto
canti di clivo in clivo a la campagna
Ave Maria.*

*Ave Maria ! Quando su l' aure corre
l' umil saluto, i piccioli mortali
scovrono il capo, curvano la fronte
Dante ed Aroldo.*

*Una di flauti lenta melodia
passa invisibil fra la terra e il cielo :
spiriti forse che furon, che sono
e che saranno ?*

*Un oblio lene de la faticosa
vita, un pensoso sospirar quïete,
una soave volontà di pianto
l' anime invade.*

The Church of Polenta

*Silent the beasts stand, men and things are silent,
Rosy the sunset on the azure fadeth,
Murmurs the stately line of green heights waving
Ave Maria.*

luglio 1897.

La Chiesa di Polenta

*Taccion le fiere e gli uomini e le cose,
roseo 'l tramonto ne l' azzurro sfuma,
mormoran gli alti vertici ondegianti*

Ave Maria.

Near a Monastery

*From the greenness still remaining, from the leaflets thin and shaken,
Ruddy tinted of acacia where no breeze is one is taken:*

*And with lightest breath meseemeth
That a soul sinks quietly.*

*Like a veil of silver lies the mist above the streamlet calling,
Through the mist within the streamlet, lonely, lost, the leaf is falling.*

*O what sighs the cemetery
In the airy cypresses?*

*Sudden breaks the sun above the early vapours fleeting, failing,
Over seas of deepest azure through the snowy cloud-rifts sailing,
Making glad the sober woodland
Chilled by winter's prophecy.*

*Unto me, or e'er the winter knits my soul in cords fast binding,
Come, O Poetry, with laughter, come with sacred lamp and
blinding!*

*Come thy song, O father Homer,
Ere the shadow fall on me.*

Presso una Certosa

*Da quel verde, mestamente pertinace tra le foglie
Gialle e rosse de l' acacia, senza vento una si toglie :*

*E con fremito leggero
Par che passi un' anima.*

*Velo argenteo par la nebbia su 'l ruscello che gorgoglia,
Tra la nebbia ne 'l ruscello cade a perdersi la foglia.*

*Che sospira il cimitero,
Da' cipressi, fievole ?*

*Improvviso rompe il sole sopra l' umido mattino,
Navigando tra le bianche nubi l' aere azzurrino :*

*Si rallegra il bosco austero
Già de 'l verno prèsgo.*

*A me, prima che l' inverno stringa pur l' anima mia
Il tuo riso, a sacra luce, o divina poesia !*

*Il tuo canto, o padre Omero,
Pria che l' ombra avvolgami !*

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